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## THE CHURCH LOOKS AHEAD

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DEDICATED  
TO  
THAT GOODLY FELLOWSHIP  
THE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS  
WHOSE HEARTS ARE SET UPON  
THE GREAT ADVENTURE  
TO MAKE  
"THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE  
IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"



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## THE CHURCH LOOKS AHEAD





## LOOKING FORWARD

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new;  
And God fulfills himself in many ways."<sup>1</sup>

### I

IN the current confusion and bewilderment in religious thinking, one thing, at least, seems certain—we are living in a new world. When we recall the kind of world in which our fathers lived, only a generation ago even, and compare that with the outlook which we face today, it seems evident that somewhere along the way the world must have turned a corner. Liberals chant the new freedom of the spirit from the chains of moribund tradition. Fundamentalists lament an age of apostasy in which it daily becomes more and more doubtful whether the Lord "will find faith upon the earth," and appeal to state legislatures to help stem the tide of unbelief. Walter Lippmann insists that "the acids of modernity" have eaten away faith in the traditional drama of redemption. All that a man has left is a kind of grim stoicism, holding doggedly to his ideals in the face of a coldly indifferent universe. The increase in membership of the churches in America, both Protestant and Roman, falls sharply until they are little more than holding their own with the increase of general population. The Jerusalem Council appeals to all religions, non-Christian as well as Christian, to unite in a common defense against "Secularism." The political and economic "Bourbons" cry out hysterical warnings against the spread of communism. The communists announce that capitalism is tottering to an imminent collapse. The Fascists of Italy, the Nazis of Germany, the Bolsheviks of Russia—all are prophets of a radical reorganization of society. The world today is evidently a changing world.

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson: *The Passing of Arthur*.

A survey of the books that are coming from the presses reveals this same all-pervading sense of instability and change. Ten years ago Charles A. Ellwood was writing of *The Reconstruction of Religion*. Then he was something of a prophet crying in the wilderness. Now he has many echoes. The last five years have produced an ever-swelling chorus ringing the changes upon this same note. An advertising man with a flare for catching the popular interest inquires, *What Can a Man Believe?* Reinhold Niebuhr asks, *Does Civilization Need Religion?* A group of thoughtful ministers raise the question, *Whither Christianity?* Another writer echoes the query, *Which Way Religion?* A leading Jewish rabbi discusses *Religion in a Changing World*. Another surveys *Christianity in the New World*. Another speculates on *Religion in the Next Generation*. A large group of ministers and laymen spend ten days in a conference exploring *The Significance of Jesus Christ in the Modern World*. One analyzes *The Moral Crisis in Christianity*, and another *The Present Crisis in Religion*. Durant Drake discusses *The New Morality*. Walter Lippmann offers us *A Preface to Morals*. Ralph Sockman sketches out *The Morals of Tomorrow*. Everywhere men are busy erecting guideposts, pointing out the way in which we are drifting, or the way in which we should be going. One suggests ways of *Meeting the Challenge of Modern Doubt*. Another describes *An Emerging Christian Faith*. Another attempts an apologetic for *Beliefs That Matter*. Another proposes *Revitalizing Religion*. Charles C. Cooper discusses *Religion and the Modern Mind*. William Adams Brown explores *The Life of Prayer in a World of Science*. W. M. Horton attempts an analysis of *Theism and the Modern Mood*. Roy Wood Sellars describes the present situation as *Religion Coming of Age*. Rufus Jones contributes *A Preface to Christian Faith in a New Age*. These are fair samples of a much larger volume of literature dealing with the problem of religion in the present generation which reflects the conviction that the old ways are passing and religion, if it is to survive, must be readjusted to meet a new situation.

## II

This new situation, all seem to agree, is directly related to the rise and ever-growing influence of scientific method and scientific attitudes. The development of the scientific method of study and investigation, the application of the results and the technique of science to the problems of production, distribution and communication, and the popularization of scientific attitudes and ideas have created a new material environment for human society and a new intellectual climate for human thinking.

The increasing influence of science has seemed to many to set up inescapable clashes with traditional religious attitudes and ideas. In these clashes religion has appeared to be fighting a losing battle. Science represents the idea of a continuously open canon of truth as opposed to the closed canon of divine revelation represented by the Scriptures and the dogmas of the church. Science proposes to hold even its most significant conclusions as tentative, subject to revision, correction or renunciation in the light of new discoveries. Religion has appeared to insist upon an absolute body of doctrine which must be accepted without question and which could never be altered or amended. Science proceeds upon the basis of an active human intelligence, continually taking the initiative in exploring, in criticising accepted dogmas, and in searching for new data and seeking to construct new generalizations of experience. Religion has seemed to place a premium upon a passive attitude in human intelligence, accepting truth as it has been revealed by an authoritative revelation or defined by an authoritative institution, and stressing humble obedience rather than courageous initiative. Science has proceeded by the inductive method of experiment, investigation and generalization, followed by criticism, renewed investigation and a continually repeated process of reconstruction of its formulæ. Religion has seemed to build upon the deductive method, accepting as final the dogmas prescribed by authority and limiting the initiative of the indi-

vidual to the exploration of the possible applications of revealed truth to the concrete problems of living.

Science has been vastly aided in the conquest of the popular mind by the magnitude of the achievements of its application to the practical problems of production, distribution and communication and the extent to which these products of applied science have been brought intimately into the life of the average individual. The machine has revolutionized the industrial life of society. It has further invaded every phase of his experience and created virtually a new material environment in which he is to live. By what has been termed "the invention of invention" science has opened up enormous ranges of possibility of mechanical and technical progress through the operation of research laboratories and the employment of experts in scientific research. All this has tended to enhance the growing popular belief in the unlimited possibilities of science.

The dominance of the machine in modern life has tended to recommend the mechanistic pattern as the ultimate description of reality. In addition to this, many of the leaders in the early development of scientific method were enthusiastic devotees of a mechanistic philosophy. In the other camp, many of the religious leaders of the past two generations set themselves in a bitter and unreasoning opposition to every proposal for a reconstruction of thought patterns that differed in even the slightest degree from the traditional dogmas of the church. In our own day a very considerable proportion of the more conservative members of the churches still regard any form of the doctrine of evolution and the whole structure of modern science in general as inimical to the preservation of a vital faith. This fact has seemed to compel open-minded, thinking men and women to choose between an obscurantist, absolutist religious tradition and an irreligious mechanistic science. Moreover science, when applied to concrete situations, produces tangible results. And the marvelous story of its achievements coupled with the confident prophecies of its acolytes seem to

promise eventually to resolve all of those mysteries in which an embattled religion appears to have dug its last entrenchments for belief in God. It is not strange that to many minds the future has seemed to forecast the gradual elimination of religion and the substitution of the method and technique of science to supply the needs of the human race.

Other factors have entered in to aggravate the disturbance in the religious situation. The drawing of the whole world into one neighborhood knit together by the bonds of intercommunication, commerce and travel, together with the development and popularization of the study of comparative religion has seemed to many to invalidate the claims of any religion to any absolute authority. The failure of traditional Christian ethics to cope with the evils that have sprung from the industrialization of society coupled with the intransigence of invested interests that insist that religion must keep hands off, tends to raise the question whether a faith that had its rise in a simple agricultural society can ever be adequate to meet the moral and spiritual demands of modern life. The critical study of the Bible, making use of the same method and procedure that are applied both to the literature of other religions and to the study of history and sociology generally, has seemed to threaten to undermine the foundation upon which an authoritative Christianity has rested.

In addition to this, the structure of American Christianity has been put to an unusual strain due to the peculiar character of American society. In the United States we have compressed a thousand years of social history within the span of a little more than a century. Until the opening years of the present century, American life has been primarily the life of a frontier society. Even today there are still considerable areas in the semi-arid plains and mountain regions of the western third of the United States that are but little removed from pioneer conditions. Meanwhile the eastern third of the country has, during the past hundred years, been transformed from an essentially

agricultural and largely pioneer to an increasingly complex industrial society. The whole pattern of the religious life of the American people has been fashioned over against a background of pioneer experience. Today we are in the midst of the stress and strain of readjusting our whole traditional religious mindset to meet the problems created by a highly industrial and predominantly urban society.

It seems to be popular today to date all events according to their relation to the World War. That gigantic social cataclysm blasted out a yawning chasm which separates life before the call to arms, from life as it has presented itself to us since the guns fell silent. There can be no question that the war has profoundly shaken our whole structure. It still waits to be seen whether, indeed, the structure has not been so severely shaken that it is doomed to break up in ruin before it can be rebuilt upon firm foundations. As the perspective through which we look back upon the events that precipitated the conflict lengthens, the more clearly do we see the pathetic impotence of the most experienced statesmen to stop the terrible war machine they had created once they had allowed the wheels to get into motion. The Christian movement will not soon recover from the humiliating discovery of the apparent helplessness of its idealism in the face of the relentless march of this modern Juggernaut. The failure of organized Christianity, with a few shining exceptions, to speak in unequivocal denunciation of an institution so glaringly opposed to the spirit and the aims of the Gospel of Jesus has tended to increase the doubt of the validity of its claims and the practicability of its program. The tragic futility of nationalism as a pattern for organizing the world's life and the apparent ineffectiveness of democracy as a form of political structure have set men searching for new forms of political organization. The spectacular rise and surprising degree of success of the communist program in Russia together with the economic collapse of the capitalistic nations that followed in the wake of the war has raised a serious question whether religion is inextricably bound up with the forces that brought about the

catastrophe, and whether a totally new approach to the problem of organizing human society for the promotion of human happiness may not be inescapable.

### III

Taking it all together, the time seems to be ripe for taking stock of the present situation in which we find the Christian movement. Five years ago Charles A. Beard remarked that "All over the world, the thinkers and searchers who scan the horizon of the future are attempting to assess the values of civilization and speculating about its destiny."<sup>2</sup> We cannot come to any conclusions about the future of western civilization without facing the question of the future of that religion that has been the inspiration and dynamic of so much of its culture. We are constrained to inquire, Where do we find ourselves? and Whither are we tending? That is the question that is raised in the succeeding chapters of this book.

The problem is divided into three sections. First we inquire, What is *The Mission of the Christian Movement*? In historical perspective, the church has answered this question in terms of seven characteristic functions: the awakening and vitalizing of an awareness of God through sacramental forms; the stimulus of mind and conscience through preaching; the cultivation of Christian attitudes and habits of life through religious education; the effort to enlist in its fellowship those not identified with the church through some form of evangelism; the ministry to concrete human problems through the pastoral office; the interaction of the sometimes antagonistic but always correlative functions of priest and prophet; and the effort to extend the influence of the Gospel of Jesus until it shall include within the fellowship of the Christian movement all the elements of a world society that has produced, during the last two hundred years a missionary program that has embraced all humanity. These seven characteristic functions mark out the dimensions of the program of the Christian movement.

<sup>2</sup> *Whither Mankind*, Longman's Green & Co., 1928. Pg. 1.

The second section undertakes to analyze *The Message of the Gospel*. It asks the question, What does the Gospel mean in terms of Personal Religion? It undertakes to explore the field of Christian Ethics. It faces the challenge of what has been called "The Social Gospel," which is only a new awareness that an industrialized society un-leavened with the Spirit of Jesus presents attitudes and patterns of social and economic organization that challenge directly the basic ideals of the Gospel and the program of the Christian movement. It reckons with the problem so dramatically set forth by the war, the problem of uniting the races and nations and classes of humanity in one unified world society. It deals with the challenge of scientific method to the traditional theology and explores the possibility of formulating a world view that shall interpret the abiding values of the Christian Gospel in terms of the categories of thought that have been created by modern science. It faces the question of the status of the Bible in the modern world. And, finally it seeks to evaluate the significance of Jesus for the struggle of the race to achieve permanent human values out of its newly won mastery over material forces.

The third section *The Method of Organized Christianity* undertakes to survey the various methods which have been employed by organized Christianity in the fulfillment of its mission and the sharing of its message with men. No phase of the life of the church in the present generation presents more interesting developments than the rise of a new spirit in church architecture. The church early began to develop its own journalistic media and today we are facing the critical question of what form this evangel of the printed page must take to reach most effectively the hurried and harried multitudes. Through the Church College Christianity has undertaken to leaven the public educational process with the insight of the gospel and the passion of loyalty to the commanding personality of her Master. Through her theological schools she has undertaken to provide a ministry trained to deal with the problems which confront her in the world today. While the drift of population



is toward a steadily increasing preponderance of the urban element, the rural areas still hold out a challenge to the church. And finally, one of the major aspects of the Christian movement, especially in America today, is the drift which is daily gathering increased momentum, toward a more vital unity in the Christian Church.



A

THE MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT



## I

### THE SACRAMENTS

JOSEPH M. M. GRAY

ANY thoroughgoing discussion of the sacraments today should, indeed must, of necessity, begin with a study of their history. It should present therefrom an exposition of their development in the thought and habit of the Church, as well as a survey of their origins and contributory sources, not only in Judaism and Christianity but in religious rites antedating Judaism and Christianity and contemporary with the formative period of the Church History. Such an exhaustive study is required because it is only after an understanding of an institution's past that its significance for the present can be reliably appraised. Only as we are familiar with the meanings which generations before us have given to the sacraments, can we profitably discriminate between the sanctions which the Church of the past confidently discovered in them and the realities which have survived the transitory conditions of thought and knowledge in which those sanctions arose.

The limits of a single chapter such as this make impossible the report of any study and exposition of this thorough character. They would require for their elucidation, as indeed more than once they have required, an entire volume. Yet as brief a presentation of the theme as this, however inadequate the implications of the subject compel it to be, is not without justification if its purpose and the limits within which the purpose must be reported, are kept in mind.

The purpose of the present chapter is readily defined. It is to sharpen and enrich the sense of value in the Protestant sacra-

ments by restating them in terms of present day experience; to aid in the deliverance of them, on the one hand, from the triteness of a custom accepted as a matter of course but unconsidered, and, on the other hand, from the assumptions of magic with which they have been at times invested by the practice of an uncritical tradition.

The statements of two thinkers, widely separated in time and character, may well introduce the treatment of the pages which follow. One is the generalization with which Professor Whitehead concludes his suggestive little volume on Symbolism, "The art of free society consists first in the maintenance of the symbolic code; and secondly in fearlessness of revision, to secure that the code serves those purposes which satisfy an enlightened reason. Those societies which can not combine reverence to their symbols with freedom of revision, must ultimately decay either from anarchy, or from slow atrophy of a life stifled by useless shadows."<sup>1</sup> Not a few applications of this principle so clearly declared by Professor Whitehead could be selected from recent literature on the sacraments. But no more familiar or suggestive utterance can be cited than Emerson's classic statement, first committed to his *Journal*, and later expanded in the famous sermon which marked his retirement from the pulpit of Second Church, Boston, a century ago.

"The communicant," he wrote in the *Journal*, "celebrates, on a foundation either of authority or of tradition, an ordinance which has been the occasion to thousands . . . of contrition, of gratitude of prayer, of faith, of love, of holy living . . . I think Jesus did not mean to institute a perpetual celebration, but that a commemoration of him would be useful. Others think that Jesus did establish this one. We are agreed that one is useful, and we are agreed, I hope, in the way in which it must be made useful, namely, by each making an original commemoration."

There is, doubtless, more agreement now as to the way in which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper must be made useful

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Symbolism, Its Meaning and Effect*. Pg. 88.

than there was in Emerson's lifetime; not even the Second Church agreed with him. But there is still a long distance to go before unanimity will be reached. There are Christians in increasing numbers who recognize in religion only the constraints of what Principal Jacks would call the Inward Sentinel; and while there are fewer persons than ever, of any pretensions to scholarship or scientific habits of mind, who can say as a contributor to *Science and Religion* has said, "If, for example, I am told that Baptism has a supernatural effect on my soul, I am certain that this effect does take place, though I cannot give a scientific demonstration which clearly shows this effect,"<sup>2</sup> there are other multitudes and not only in Rome, Anglicanism and the Lutheran Churches, who still celebrate "on a foundation of authority or of tradition." As late as 1920, a notable paper read at the Church Congress, in England, began with the statement that "Our blessed Lord instituted two sacraments which we must observe according to his command. Therefore the first part of our experience of the sacraments is the experience of obedience. We are doing what we are told. And that is a very great experience indeed."<sup>3</sup>

One does not discredit the sincerity of such an utterance, nor the devotion of multitudes whose conception of the sacraments it represents, in remarking that, however satisfying it may be as the witness of a personal belief, it is quite defective as a contribution to knowledge, for it takes for granted the very first element in the discussion of the sacraments which is in dispute, the claim concerning which modern scholarship and thought increasingly register their dissent. No longer can it be declared in that serene fashion that "our blessed Lord instituted two sacraments." It is more and more difficult to escape the conviction, supported by devout and critical study of the Gospels, that Jesus was wholly concerned with great spiritual ideals for personal and social life, and with the recognition of practical moral principles by which his disciples should express

<sup>2</sup> Rev. C. W. O'Hara in *Science and Religion*. Article VIII. Pg. 113.

<sup>3</sup> *The Modern Churchman*, October, 1926. Pg. 448.

and effectualize such ideals. The institution, forms, organizations, and the like which Christians should find helpful, He left them to discover for themselves. "Jesus was the least ceremonial, the least liturgical person in the world; nothing in the Sermon on the Mount, nothing in the parables, nothing in what he said about worship, demands an altar, implies an altar, or even looks altarward. He was on that side, at least, in the line of the prophets who could never see God clearly through the smoke of sacrifice, but found the smoke of sacrifice, on the contrary, a cloud between them and God." \* Certainly, moreover, some of the by-products of the emphasis upon the sacraments which has followed from a belief that Jesus personally instituted them have not commended them as, *per se*, divinely established. The intolerance and acrimony with which good men have interpreted their necessity to the Christian life have resulted in some of the saddest pages in the story of the Church. When one recalls the divisions, the bitterness, the antagonisms and exclusions which have risen around the rite of Baptism, it is more truly reverent and, to not a few Christians' minds, more reasonable not to trace the institution to any command of Christ; while the spectacle of the World Conference on Faith and Order finding its members unable to celebrate the Lord's Supper together makes comment in this direction unnecessary.

It is not, of course, to be denied that the official belief of the Church—Eastern, Roman, Protestant alike—for centuries has been that Jesus actually did institute the sacraments. The belief, originated early, was maintained because of its practical usefulness, and by the very obscurity of the origins of the sacraments was the more easily accepted by uncritical "ages of faith." During these centuries it followed, quite naturally, that the necessity of the sacraments to the Christian life was devoutly believed; but no one, apparently, took the trouble or felt the curiosity to ask why. The solemn, incontrovertible utterance of the Church, its awesome rituals of mystery and terror, declared that through miracles wrought only within its sanctuaries the

\* Atkins, *Making of the Christian Mind*. Pg. 196.



physical elements of the sacraments conveyed saving graces from Almighty God elsewhere and otherwise inaccessible, and without which salvation was beyond human reach. We look back, today, on a long and proud tradition of faith in Jesus' institution of the sacraments. Nevertheless to discover that a thousand years and more of uncritical belief and unexamined practice and Church tradition have witnessed the authority of the sacraments and proclaimed the necessity of them for salvation is not, of itself, to have established the thesis that they were actually established by Jesus.

Again, it can hardly be denied that Jesus performed or acquiesced in certain historical occurrences which have been memorialized in our sacraments. But the voluminous literature defending the claim that he instituted them fails, for the most part if not altogether, to discriminate between his performance of or acquiescence in the physical actions and his regarding them as sacramental. Writers who argue sincerely for the thesis of Jesus' establishment of them identify as sacraments certain actions and occurrences reported in Scripture, without considering that the Sacramental idea might have been wholly absent from his mind. To say that because Jesus was baptized by John therefore he enjoined Baptism as a sacrament to be dutifully observed by his disciples through all time, is to forget that the same logic would impose foot washing upon the Church as a sacrament also. "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." <sup>8</sup> The sects which have practiced footwashing, though disregarded by the orthodox, only carry the logic of the Church's tradition to its conclusion, and witness the unmistakable inconsistency of the tradition itself.

Putting into a sentence or two what would require a volume in verification, Baptism with its significance of spiritual purifying and as an entrance into a religious organization does not come to us from Jesus. It does not come to us from the Hebrew ritual of reception of proselytes into Judaism. It comes to us

<sup>8</sup> John 13:14. American Standard Version.

from John the Baptist. Jesus acquiesced in the rite for himself, and his disciples administered it to others, as the record in St. John 4:1 makes very clear. "When therefore the Lord knew that the pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples) he left Judea and departed again into Galilee." <sup>5a</sup> Even this record, however, may hint at something of disapproval on Jesus' part, that his disciples were baptizing. But be that as it may, it certainly does not follow that Jesus instituted baptism *as a sacrament*. The same negative conclusion seems inevitable in respect of the Supper. A library has been produced on the subject, pro and con; but nothing can alter the significant facts that St. John does not mention the bread and wine, that the Synoptics do not hint that Jesus so much as suggested that the disciples were to repeat the breaking of bread and the drinking of the common cup, and that the injunction "This do in remembrance of me," <sup>6</sup> comes to us from St. Paul alone. It is perhaps of unusual significance, also, that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, notwithstanding its appropriateness of his thought and method, does not so much as refer to it, unless as Dr. Moffatt suggests, he protests in 13:9 against the "rising conception of *the Lord's Supper*" as an eating of the body of Christ.<sup>7</sup> The conclusion, as given in another paper read before the Conference of Modern Churchmen, to which reference has already been made, seems to be inescapable, "that there is in the Gospels an entire lack, and that a very remarkable lack of sound historic evidence of the institution by Christ himself, either of the rite of Baptism or of the Eucharist as special sacraments to be observed and practiced by all who profess to be Christians."<sup>8</sup>

The Book of Acts contains unmistakable references to "a ceremonial breaking of bread by the Christian Community," but in it the emphasis was apparently placed not upon the wine

<sup>5a</sup> American Standard Version.

<sup>6</sup> I Corinthians 11:24.

<sup>7</sup> Moffatt, *Hebrews*; *International Critical Commentary*. Pg. 234.

<sup>8</sup> Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul*. Pg. 181.

but upon the bread; and only predetermined interpretation finds in the custom as reported there the sacramental meaning which tradition attaches to the Lord's Supper. The Book of Acts reflects what was actually a Thanksgiving, a genuine Eucharist which, with whatever memorial significance it carried, does not suggest that any supernatural channel of grace was disclosed. As was observed above, it was St. Paul who gave us the injunction, "Do this in remembrance of me"; but while St. Paul speaks of both Baptism and the Lord's Supper, he never speaks of them together. He administered baptism so infrequently that he could easily enumerate all the occasions—and declares with considerable positiveness that it was not his apostolic business to perform such service. "For Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel." \* He participated in the Lord's Supper, but if what he has definitely said in his Epistles is to be trusted, it was not because the Supper was instituted as a sacrament by Jesus, nor because by so doing he entered upon the "experience of obedience." It was because thereby Christ was so vividly recalled "that His continual presence, which was a matter of faith, became a fact of experience." †

All of the foregoing, together with a great deal of exposition and reference which might be added, leads to the conclusion that the value and authority of the sacraments do not rise from their origins in any command of Jesus, or in any sacramental theory and practice of the Apostolic Church. They have the beauty of a great tradition hallowed by centuries of assent and of the devotion of generations of saintly and struggling souls. But their value depends upon, whatever authority they have rises from, the effect which the use of them, particularly of the Lord's Supper, produces in the experience and life of the celebrant. It is not only that, as Emerson wrote, the way in which the Supper is to be made useful is by each making it an original commemoration; it is that the justification of it, as of Baptism, is to be found only in the quality of experience which the Chris-

\* I Corinthians 1:14-17,

† Scott, *op. cit.* Pg. 196.

tian derives from his participation in it, and the Christian loyalty which his participation witnesses to the observing society.

It is quite unnecessary to labor an argument against another claim once universally made for the sacraments and still declared by some confessions, that, namely, they are necessary for salvation. Trader Horn had no thought of theology or ritual when he said, "The Quakers, Ma'am, I've always held to be above par"; but he was indicating, nevertheless, a refutation of the claim that the sacraments are indispensable for salvation. The Christian character of the Quakers is nowhere in dispute. The Salvation Army lacks more than one of the characteristics we are accustomed to require in a church, but its history of transformed lives and heroic ministry to the least and the low-est of mankind render impossible a denial that its sacrificial membership is truly Christian. But neither the Quakers nor the Army makes use of the sacraments.

It is here that Professor Whitehead's admonition <sup>11</sup> suggests the trend of what must by no means be simply an unconsidered drift of mind concerning the sacraments today but must rather become an intelligently directed exploration and practice of them. We must combine reverence toward them as symbols with freedom of revision in respect of their significance and of the theory which supports our continued use of them; in order that they may constantly serve those great religious purposes which not only provoke noble emotion but which also satisfy enlightened reason. The fundamental question which has to be examined is not, How did the sacraments originate? nor Are they necessary for salvation? but, What does participation in them do for the devout participant?

There will be different answers, and in the nature of the case, one cannot prove another wrong. When Father O'Hara, as quoted above, <sup>12</sup> declares that when he is told that Baptism has had a supernatural effect on his soul he is certain that the effect has taken place, although he cannot prove it, the most

<sup>11</sup> Pg. 14 above.

<sup>12</sup> Pg. 15.

confident Protestant cannot contradict him. No Protestant can say what has happened to Father O'Hara's soul. No Protestant believes that any one but Father O'Hara can be certain of what goes on in Father O'Hara's soul, although Father O'Hara's superiors in the Roman Church, speaking for the historic Church itself, logically can claim to know more about it than Father O'Hara. Even more emphatically is this to be said concerning the Last Supper, as to the nature and meaning of which any man's position, as Dr. Atkins says, "has already determined the argument which he advances to maintain it."<sup>18</sup> What remains to be said in this chapter cannot, therefore, be in the nature of a debate, but simply a survey of the significance and effect of the sacraments, particularly the Lord's Supper, which seem to commend themselves in experience to an increasing number of Protestant Christians.

The discussion may well center upon the Lord's Supper, in which whatever values and meaning there are in religious symbolism come to their most intense and intimate expression. Baptism, by the greater majority of Christians, has to be accepted as an outward sign of inward grace, without any experience of the fact at all. Those who are baptized as adults may feel the unique and even an awesome emotion; but even they, very much like Father O'Hara, must take their certainty of any actual change wrought within them, not from experience but on the authoritative witness of the tradition. What Baptism effects, so far as experience is concerned, follows far more profoundly from participation in the Lord's Supper. What that experience is and the specific part that the Supper has in evoking it are of more importance today for Protestants than in many years because of the recent development of Gothic architecture and ritualistic services in Protestant churches heretofore quite dissociated from the Gothic and ritualistic tradition. When, for instance, Methodists build altars in their churches, with the pulpit and the lectern on either side, and the steps leading, in the center, to the altar where formerly their fathers in the faith

<sup>18</sup> Atkins, *The Making of the Christian Mind*. Pg. 196f.

placed a very plain and not always sightly rail, unconsciously they are erecting a visible contradiction to the Reformation out of which they ultimately derive. For the Reformers put away the altar and restored the table, because they had recovered the New Testament; as the table of the Lord's Supper had become an altar only because the bread and wine of Thanksgiving had become the miracle of the Mass. To trace that process of development is not possible in this chapter, valuable as it would be. Readers who wish to do so will find the story briefly but nobly told in Dr. Atkins' volume, *The Making of the Christian Mind*.

Notwithstanding this recent development of what has been called the God and the Gothic movement in American Protestantism there is no reason to fear that it will cease to be inconsistent and travel from its makeshift altars to the only theory of the Supper which can justify them, that of Transsubstantiation. It will either continue to be a curious paradox, amusing or irritating those who know Protestant origins and theology, as the case may be, or it will return in due time to the robust simplicity its character requires, beautified and enriched doubtless, but in ways that do not betray its Reformation principles. Above the graves of the two British troopers buried at Concord are the famous lines:

They came three thousand miles and died  
To keep the Past upon its throne.

It is worth recalling that they died doing it and did not get it done. American Protestantism will not follow their example. It has not travelled from the British Isles and the Reformation in order, at this late day, to restore a Sacramentarian past.

For all of which, nevertheless, across the great gulf that separates the Sacramentarian conception of the Supper from the nonsacramentarian view, they are not without a kinship discoverable in the experience which is sought and found alike at the altar of the Mass and at the table of the Commemoration. The Anglo-Catholic woman who defended the reservation of the

elements in her cathedral, in spite of Parliament and the English tradition, by saying that she could not worship in a church where her Lord was not present, might seem to be illimitably separated from a nonconformist insisting upon the barest accessories and the scantiest ritual of a nonconformist chapel; but their essential quest is the same. It is for the realized presence of Christ.

A chaplain in France during the war has written:

"Last Tuesday I had my first Communion Service out here in France. We could not get a room of any kind, so we held the service in the corner of a field behind some billets. I spread my mackintosh on the grass and it served for a table; I used the Communion service which was given me when I left the old country. Twelve men formed a semi-circle round me, and the evening shadows were gathering over us when I began to read the words, 'Dearly beloved, in the Lord.' Then in the twilight the twelve came one by one and knelt upon a corner of the mackintosh and received the broken bread and outpoured wine. As we knelt together in Holy Communion we could hear the voices of men returning from a game of football in a neighboring field. As they passed through an opening in the hedge near us, they lowered their voices and passed quietly on to their billets in the village. When each of the twelve soldiers had partaken, and returned to his place, I gave out, verse by verse, by the help of an electric torch, 'When I survey the wondrous cross.' In the utter stillness of the fields we sang, and, although between the verses we could hear the low booming of distant guns, we rejoiced in the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus. After the Benediction we went our several ways, but two of our lads walked with me to the crossroads. From there my way led through a piece of open country for some two miles. The night was dark, and the wind wailed over the fields. On my right I could plainly see the flashes and flares that light up the battle-front at night. They held my eyes with a strange fascination as I took my solitary way. Suddenly I turned to a clump of trees on my left, and there saw what I had already seen by day—a tall, stone cross with a small bronze figure of Christ nailed upon it. The men I had knelt with at the Sacrament had been twelve months in the trenches. They knew the meaning of those lights on my right, but they knew also the meaning of that cross on my left, and standing between the two they can say, 'God is love.'"<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Tiplady, *The Cross at the Front*. Pg. 35, 36, 37.

Of the reality and nature of such an experience, of which many were reported during the war, there can be no doubt; of their practical value in the life of the communicants there can be no denial. But from them it is impossible to argue for the Sacraments as a channel of some particular kind of grace accessible in no other way. Even when one interprets the references of the Epistles to the Corinthians as supporting a doctrine of the Real Presence, it is not a Presence localized in either elements or ritual. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>15</sup> The Real Presence in the Communion is a matter of reality and presence in the Heart and faith of the communicant. That the Sacrament of the Supper vivifies that reality, that it brings a pervading and intimate sense of the Presence of Christ, is a truth of experience common to all branches of the Universal Church that maintain the sacraments at all. Christ, to cite again the incisive remark of C. A. A. Scott, is so vividly recalled that His continual presence, which was a matter of faith, becomes a fact of experience.<sup>16</sup> Whether it be before the new altars of a Gothic Protestant church, or in the bleakness of the most primitive and unritualistic meeting house, or under the open sky amid the menace of the insatiable and unchristian guns, each communicant must make his participation in the Supper an original commemoration, and the presence of Christ which is but symbolized in the elements is discovered in an experience in which noble emotion rewards and seals the adventure of a declarative faith that He is there. So, stripped of the mystery gathered to it by the long, sacramentarian tradition, absolved from any dependence upon a priesthood, discerned as a symbol and not a sacrifice, the Holy Communion, as Dr. Rashdall wrote long since, is worship at its highest, which surely gives it, as he declared, sufficient title to our reverence.

There are deeply religious minds to whom such a conception of the Supper would seem fatally incomplete and inadequate.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 18:20.

<sup>16</sup> See page 19 above.



To them the essence of the Sacrament, as reference has already been made, is that it is necessary for the maintenance of Christian experience and life. But while this is one of the places where one reaches his position and discovers his defense of it afterward, yet the logic of it leads into strange country. If participation in the Supper is necessary for the maintenance of truly Christian experience and life, how often is it necessary? If Christian experience and life can be maintained for a week without participation in the Supper, why not for a month? If for three months, as in many a Protestant Church, why not for three years? And always the Quakers rise like a vast question-mark searching the very stuff of devotion. The Sacramentarian tradition has produced in those born and bred within it a devotion of peculiar quality and flavor. It is not a devotion reflected in personal character or loyalty or intelligence superior to those of nonsacramentarian Christians. The piety, the reverence, the heroism, in a word, the Christian experience and life of multitudes to whom the very beauty of the altar was anathema are written into the noblest history of commonwealths as well as confessions. But the Sacramentarian theory and practice have flowered, not alone in the surrender of private judgment and an abandonment of personal moral responsibility, but at their best, in lives of contemplation and adoration to which the Eternal is as the very climate of the soul. That, however, is not to say that only the Sacramentarian tradition can shelter and sustain such lives, nor that in lives so sheltered and sustained there may not also be united the more practical conduct of experience which, to use Professor Whitehead's phrase, will satisfy enlightened reason. What is vital in the nature of the Sacraments whether they be administered before blazing altars or in the shadow of blasphemous cannon, is that through what the Apostle would call spiritual discernment they shall be so apprehended and used as to make God real in experience and so to enrich life with confidence and humility and awe and peace. When this is achieved in the believing worshipper Christian

devotion has justified itself and the symbol declares what God through faith has wrought. When this is not accomplished, neither theory nor ritual can preserve the Christian experience from "the atrophy of a life stifled by useless shadows."

## II

### MODERN PREACHING AND WORSHIP

WILSON G. COLE

#### I

THERE is a tendency in modern progressive religion to put the pulpit on the side and the altar in the center. It is not a movement of reactionary fundamentalists, who are interested in making religion an echo of the past, but, strangely enough, it comes from a group of otherwise forward-looking religionists. Of course, there is much to be said for this swing to the ritualistic and ceremonial in worship. But before we completely accept the replacement of the altar for the pulpit, we ought to reflect on what we are doing.

1. Our first reflection would be that it is a movement not in harmony with the prominence of preaching in the history of the Christian Church.

Modern Christian preaching has had two sources of commanding importance. One was the synagogue, the other Greek oratory. The synagogue in its origin was a departure from the institutionalized religion of the Hebrews expressed in the temple. It arose out of a distinct human need for expression of religious experience. People who had achieved, or were struggling toward achievement, in character and spiritual life met together and talked out in the meeting what was in their hearts. Jesus entered the synagogue because it gave him the opportunity of free expression of new and needed truth.

The early Church came out, not of the temple, but the synagogue. At first it was just a movement among synagogue Jews. But the truths that these early followers of the Nazarene were

uttering were too dynamic to be kept within the walls of even a synagogue. They were forced out to form a new kind of religion, but they carried with them that freedom of self-expression of religious experience and religious ambition. The early Christian Church, however, was not merely a synagogue product, but was influenced by the Greek Gentiles who brought their heritage of Greek rhetoric and culture. It is well known that the Greeks, in achievements of public speaking, in the discovery of technique in special training, and in the building of speech curriculum, had surpassed any educational system of their time. They fused their values with the contributions of the synagogue in bringing into being a new factor in religious progress, namely, the reality of religious experience expressed in public speech used to secure adherents to a new religious cause.

There never has been a time in the history of preaching when these two factors were not present. Certainly every high peak in the progress of the Church has been marked by a break away from institutionalized authoritative worship and a moving toward a free expression of religious experience. At these crucial times there has also been the contribution of effective speech from the Greeks. This combination was signally present in the Reformation. The old wine bottles of Romanism could no longer hold the irresistible truth of a living Christian experience. The new truth broke through. It flowed from the vigorous impassioned speech of spirit-fired men like Martin Luther. This was equally clear in the Wesleyan Revival. Here again there was a new departure from an authoritative religion, a departure that was inevitable because John Wesley and his co-workers were experiencing religious realities that could not be expressed in the old forms. The pulpit was necessary and the voice of the preacher was a directing factor in leading toward a new day for all people.

The parallel still holds for those forward-looking, socially minded, human-divine prophets of today who must find expression of living truth in preaching.

Therefore, it is not a mere accident that Protestantism has

elevated the pulpit and made of prime importance the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. It is in harmony with the sources and history of Christian preaching.

2. Our second reflection is that this movement toward replacing the pulpit with the altar is out of harmony with Christian philosophy. The contention of those who are responsible for this swing toward the altar is that it is making religious worship God-centered instead of our present form that makes worship man-centered. The assumption of the ritualist, who places the altar in the central part of worship, is that sacred material better reveals God than a living, dedicated personality. The Roman Catholic Church, therefore, is right. They have a God-centered religion. The priest even turns his back to his audience as he faces the Host. The climax of the mass is reached when, at the tinkling of a bell, the priest holds aloft the Host and all the people bow before presented divinity.

But the Christian philosophy has always been personalistic. The Christian Church has never been satisfied with a theory of reality that was expressed in something less vague and apprehensible than a person.

Preaching affords the opportunity of worshipping God through personality. It is the most natural way of opening the door to Divine reality. It is, therefore, worship at its climax. If the human person is above any form of life or material reality, then the declaration of truth through a person must be a higher form of worshipful revelation than the presentation of a Christ made of metal and run to into the mold of a crucifix, or represented by a eucharistic wafer. The human personality, made in the image of God, is the bloom of creation. All else that exists in the material or mechanistic universe is but trunk and branches and stems of a tree which make possible the bearing of the blossom and fruit of God's supreme purpose in conscious self-directing human beings. If this be the basic Christian philosophy, then Christian people, endeavoring to express their hopes and adorations and ambitions and longings in a form of worship, would most naturally find the most adequate

expression through human personality. The dedicated spirit-fired preacher has, for the people from one generation to another, met this need in worship. Surcharged with Divine purpose, not only the words, but his personality has declared the presence of God and the people have bowed in reverence.

This is not an undue exaltation of the preacher as a man. It is rather an exaltation of the God of mankind expressing himself through one of his dedicated creatures. It is a more natural and dynamic way of worship than to seek for the revelation of God through mechanical forms and material objects. The Christian conception of God as a person, and of man as made in the image of God, lead naturally to preaching as an expression of worship for a whole congregation. For preaching is truth and worship and Divine revelation through personality.

3. A third reflection on this strange trend to ritualism and ceremony in progressive religion is that it is not in harmony with the way of religious achievement. If one should make a graph that represented the peaks and depressions in securing new adherents to the Christian faith, he would find that the peaks were periods of great preaching. He would also find that the depressions were periods of which religion was expressed only in ritual and ceremony. Such a graph has been made for the churches of America in the last hundred years by H. C. Weber and published in his book, *Evangelism, a Graphic Survey*.<sup>1</sup> The peaks for each Protestant denomination represent periods of great revivals or religious awakening due to effective preaching. There is the Revival of 1857. There are peaks in every denomination during the ministry of Dwight L. Moody. There are peaks due to the vigorous, though unscientific, heraldry of William A. Sunday.

But perhaps the best illustration of the effectiveness of the pulpit as a means of achievement in religion is the story of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It began with a man who could not express the surging religious emotions within himself in a

<sup>1</sup> Macmillan, 1929.

cathedral setting. John Wesley's pulpit became a platform near to the common people. Sometimes it was in the marketplace, other times in the open field. Charles Sylvester Horne in *The Romance of Preaching* emphasizes this age-old human urge in John Wesley that drove him out of cathedral walls into the places where people lived. He spoke out of his own experience into the needs of the experience of human beings who received his words.

"The fascination of John Wesley's life is in the gradual achievement of full spiritual liberty, and Emancipation from the trammels of ecclesiastical convention, as his spirit is by degrees illuminated in actual contact with his fellows."<sup>2</sup>

Thus this movement away from the Church of England began. No religious movement has ever matched the record of progress of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the first fifty years of its activities. From 1800 to 1850 its membership increased from 64,894 to 1,243,841. It has always been a preaching movement. Men whose hearts were "strangely warmed" have spoken in the language of the people. If it is to continue to succeed in winning new recruits to the Christian way, in building new roads for the coming of the King, in laying everlasting foundations for the building of God's Kingdom, then it would seem that the pulpit must continue to be the most effective way of achievement.

If the Church is still out on the mission to enlist new followers and make the world Christian, past achievements, at least, would point to the wisdom of taking the way of the pulpit rather than the altar. When ritualistic form takes precedence over pulpit oratory, it is an indication that the church has arrived and is ready to become entrenched. It is not on the march for new conquests. One cannot escape the feeling, as he enters a modern Methodist Episcopal Church, costing half a million dollars, and discovers as he walks down the aisle that he is facing an altar and not a pulpit with candles burning on the

<sup>2</sup> Pg. 246.

altar, and when he sees a Methodist preacher enter with an impressive black trailing robe and hears the chants and the responses of a highly ritualistic service, that the whole drama is a call backward, a discounting of John Wesley's departure from a cathedral form of religion. Another inescapable thought in such atmosphere is that when a church feels that it has become rich enough, successful enough, well enough established, that it needs no longer to attempt to capture the wistful multitude by alert, impassioned preachers, we may be sure that some new religious movement will soon appear with a new heraldry that will reach and grip and transform again the multitudes. The way of success in religion, at least for Protestantism, is the way of great preaching.

## II

From what has been said above, it may appear that the writer is averse to any ritual or ceremony in religion. Such an impression would be wholly untrue to the conception of preaching advanced in this chapter. This conception is that for the Protestant order of worship the sermon ought to be the climax. The only quarrel entered into here is with those who subordinate preaching to ritual. The truer attitude, the one most in harmony with the Christian spirit in its progress through the ages, is the use of ritual and ceremony only as it has understandable, applicable, significance for those who are participating in the worship. The order of worship that moves with growing interest until the preaching of the sermon and then reaches an emotional and spiritual climax in the declaration of truth through personality, should be thoughtfully and carefully prepared. The church architecture, the message of stained-glass windows, the ministry of right lighting, the power over spirit of music, the revelation of truth in prayer and Scripture and responses are all essential parts of a great worship service. These and other factors are needed to create the atmosphere for the sermon. In a favorable atmosphere, then, the preacher, trembling with the consciousness that he is for the people to become



the voice of God, sounds the skynotes to meet earth-needs. On the homeward way from church, devout souls may be saying, "Did not our hearts burn within us as the preacher-man talked of God?"

That is great preaching and beautiful worship. What are some of the distinct values of such a theory of preaching?

1. The first value is that a heightened evaluation of preaching tends to produce great preaching. If you can convince the majority of modern preachers that the preparation and delivery of the sermon is, after all, only a subordinate part in the order of worship, you have succeeded in making the sermon in character and content subordinate in reality. On the other hand, if the preacher preparing for his life work, and then through the years of service to the church, is captured by the idea that, as he declares the truths of life from the pulpit, he is occupying a more significant place in worship than the priest with the sacraments and crucifix, such a conception will be reflected in the greatness of his message. His sentences and phrasing will be more beautiful. The glow of his spirit will speak in colorful words, meaningful gesture, and graceful demeanor. Great preachers, from the time that Chrysostom stood on the steps of the cathedral in Antioch to pour forth a stream of golden eloquence to the modern heraldry of a great social prophet like Bishop Francis J. McConnell, have invariably felt the greatness of their task. It is that sense of essentiality and, at times, almost Divine dominance, that has carried the preacher to more than earthly utterances. If one had the power to start back through the history of preaching and convince these unearthly souls like Paul, Chrysostom, St. Francis, Savonarola, Peter the Hermit, John Wycliff, Martin Luther, John Knox, and John Wesley that their preaching was only a small part of worship and significant only as it related people to an institutionalized church, one would pare down these towering peaks to the ordinaries of the innumerable hills of time. Great preachers thought preaching was great.

Not only will a heightening conception give the unearthly

touch to preaching, but it will tend to beautify and enrich the speech of the man in the pulpit. It will engender the ambition to bring to the delivery of the sermon the finest in language, the best in dramatics, the most effective in psychological procedure. He will bring to his task a knowledge and mastery of human emotions. He will be an artist in awakening the imagination. He will be skilled in capturing and holding attention. Much of our uninteresting, matter-of-fact preaching of today is due to the conception on the part of the preacher that his task is not so essential as the ritualism of worship or the program of religious education.

2. A second value that results from this heightened evaluation of preaching is the strengthening of the social leadership of the pulpit. Where the emphasis is predominantly ritual and ceremony, the impression of worship on the people is likely to be *laissez-faire*. The major result of the church service is the sense of security. Such an impression is of exceeding value for many people, and for all people at certain periods when they need the sense of rest and peace, a relaxing of mind and soul. But preaching has never been committed to the established order. A chaplain may make those who are profiting by an un-Christian social order feel the security of God who will take care of them and the poor. But preaching is not a confirmation of things as they are, but a vision of things as they ought to be. Of course, if the preacher, when he begins to sound disturbing notes, calling for the correction of age-long injustices, freeing people from the bondage of cruel environments, appealing for love and fairness in burden sharing, is reminded that he is but expressing his own opinion and that the main part of religion is not what he may say, but the repeating of prayers, the bowing before an image, the participating in introits and responses, his social message will lack the force of the great leadership of the preachers of another day. For there was a time when preachers made kings tremble, when the boundaries of nations were determined by their message, when better history was written because they spoke. "When this man preached, the world knew

the battle had sounded," \* is the appraisal of Dr. Sylvester Horne of the power of John Wesley.

No one would question the tragic need in our time for an adequate social leadership. Repeatedly in religious, as well as non-religious gatherings, has it been pointed out that the present social order is diseased. In the areas where the disease is virulent, human personality is being sacrificed on the altar of an un-Christian economic system. Many of our cities are wildernesses with their unemployed, their gangsters, and their poor herded into cramped, unsanitary rooms, and their lecherous rich, living soft lives from the hard toil of poorly paid labor. A voice of mercy and righteousness needs to be heard crying to these modern wildernesses. It may be that the wilderness is ready for the voice of the preacher. As Moses came down from the mountain after talking with God, with a message and a light powerful enough to swing the people away from material worship, so our confused and stumbling, suffering and material-worshipping civilization at the bottom of the mountain will doubtless respond to the sky message and sky pilot when he speaks as the voice of God.

The dynamic toward a new social order may come from prophet preachers. The engineering may be carried out by scientists, but the motivation will come from men, who not only live in the sense of God, but are able to make the people sense his presence and reality. We look for this social leadership of the ministry when ministers again become for the people the voice of the Eternal.

3. A third value that comes from the heightening of the place of preaching is making worship a creative, life-giving reality. Going through old forms, sacred for their age, has a tendency to make religion sepulchral. There is a grave-cloth aspect to a worship service that has erred on the side of liturgy. Black-robed preachers and solemn-faced ushers may have the congregation moving to the spirit of a dirge. Such atmosphere of death is not only unattractive in itself, but is, in reality, death

\* *Op. cit.* Pg. 247.

to religion. Religion is an adventuring in faith, it is pioneering in a search for God, it is a break out of prisons of sin and ignorance into the liberty of purity and intelligence, it is pushing back life's horizons, it is making a bigger, more beautiful world. How can such a joyous shouting religious reality be realized except through the free spontaneous oratory of a man of God caught up and driven by the spirit of Jesus Christ? To keep the preacher unhampered and undwarfed by ritual and ceremony is to make possible personal religious awakenings in our modern congregations.

### III

All that has been said against the replacement of the altar for the pulpit and the values of a heightened conception of preaching assumes that the message and messenger are to be of the highest order. There is no place in this conception for the showman in the pulpit, even as there is no place for the crude and slovenly in speech and manner. The preparation and delivery of the sermon call for the best in thinking, in writing, in public speaking. Preaching should ever be on the side of culture. It should never be lowered to the vulgar vernacular of the street, though its message is in the heart-language of the common people. This does not mean that preaching is to be less interesting or attractive than the theatre or the sensational stream of news in our tabloid journals. In fact, the only time that preaching is less fascinating than the show and the sensational news is when it tries to compete with these feeders of the low hunger of people. When it keeps itself pure, beautiful, authoritative, and dramatic, playing on the whole gamut of human emotions and interests, it rises superbly above any other human attraction.

The modern preacher may learn much from the study of the outstanding preachers of the great revival movements in the history of the Church. They all bore certain essential marks. First the great preacher, in himself, gives startling visibility to what is in the hearts of the multitude. The moment he speaks

his hearers recognize his authority, for he is saying what is deepest in themselves. He is always more truly the interpreter of the movement than the creator of it. Again, he is sensitive to the noises of the world. The burden of the times, which others feel, to him is an intolerable load. When he speaks there is an urgency about his utterance. A further characteristic is an unquestioning and unshakable faith in God. He is obsessed by a sense of the Divine call and has made a complete dedication of himself to the service of the people. He is conscious, after the dedication, of a mysterious equipment of spiritual power. To these characteristics may also be added the fact of the simplicity of his language. His speech may be beautiful, poetic, but it is never involved and vague and so beclouded that the man from the mine or the mill could not get immediately the import of his heraldry. A final characteristic is his emphasis upon great and abiding doctrines of faith. He is modern only in the sense that he knows the urge and the yearning of human lives of his times and is well acquainted with their language, but he is timeless in bringing a message of the Eternal to meet the needs of the hour.

May we continue to beautify and make more effective and meaningful our orders of worship. But may we be careful not to allow an elaborate ritual and an altar-centered architecture to limit the free expression of the preacher interpreting the Scripture, history, modern life, Jesus, the Master and Savior for all time, and God, the Father of every age.

### III

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ARLO AYRES BROWN

### *A Teacher the Founder of Christianity*

THE Christian movement took its rise as well as its name from a teacher, the greatest teacher in history. However, the movement has often departed far from the channels which its leader prescribed for it by his words and example. One of these departures has been the failure to maintain Jesus' emphasis upon teaching as a method of developing the Kingdom of God. The setting of a child as a symbol of the ideal citizen of the kingdom surely did not involve exalting the virtues of childhood as the mature achievements of a disciple, but rather the faith, the open mind, the eager, clean, wholesome thinking; the possibilities of growing life.

### *A Teaching Religion*

But however we interpret his reference to the child, it is certain that he tried to bring to man a fuller, richer life, that he used constantly the teaching method, that strangers hailed him as "teacher" (rabbi), and that his twelve closest followers were called "learners" (disciples). Jesus vivified and illustrated by example as well as by precept the highest ideals of the Hebrew prophets. Paul took up his message, illustrated its power by his own life, and put its main features into systematic form so that they could be understood and appropriated throughout the Roman world. Brilliant teachers of the second century like Origen, Clement of Alexandria and Justin the Martyr, later

such as Augustine, presented these truths in their relation to the best-known philosophies of their day, and thus made the religion of Jesus Christ available for use around the world.

But in this chapter we are not so much concerned with a history of the teaching method in the development of the Christian movement as with the interpretation of this aspect of Christian activity in our day. Education as a word is so all-embracing that it is difficult to keep from discussing almost every function of the church as an educational function. Worship certainly has educational aspects. Preaching is clearly a method of teaching if used as Jesus and Paul used it. Evangelism must claim teaching as its most important method of winning new Christians and of making them Christlike. The "cure of souls," pastoral medicine, places dependence upon "conditioning reflexes," setting high ideals, strengthening the will, organizing personality about a new motive, in short, upon educational procedures. However, it is clearly the wish of the editor of this volume that this chapter shall deal with religious education as it relates particularly to the effort on the part of the churches to operate schools for teaching the Christian religion, which will be as effective in this one field as the public schools are in their several fields.

### *Aims of Leaders in Religious Education*

"Every church a school in Christian living," summarizes briefly the ideals of the workers in religious education. This was the slogan of the quadrennial convention of The International Council of Religious Education held in Toronto, June 23-29, 1930. The International Council of Religious Education represents forty-two denominations in a coöperative effort to promote Christian education. Other agencies which give a large part of their attention to this promotive effort are The Council of Church Boards of Education, representing denominational schools, colleges and universities, and the well-known Religious Education Association which gives its attention especially to research rather than to promotion. Each of the three

organizations would not hesitate to approve the Toronto slogan as expressing one of its ideals. The development of a generation which is Christlike in character and in personality, expressing Christlike ideals in their aims and daily conduct, is the goal of all workers who promote religious education through the churches of Jesus Christ.

At Toronto many vital questions were raised, such as—When is education Christian? Such well-known leaders as Luther A. Weigle, George Albert Coe, and others, attempted to answer the question. A brief appraisal of the aims and present needs of the movement from the standpoint of Christian workers was drawn up by a "Committee on Emphases." The four principal lines of emphasis recommended were the following:

"First, no emphasis stands out more clearly in our minds than the conviction that we must constantly strive to make our program of religious education more truly Christian. This involves putting Christ at the center as our ideal example and the source of our inspiration. We believe that under the guidance of his spirit, the Holy Spirit, young and old may become increasingly Christlike in their attitudes and in their habits of daily living. We seek to develop a generation which will have the virtues of the early Christians so effectively set forth by Doctor Tittle—the virtues of vision, courage and love.

"Our second major emphasis for the quadrennium is to make the needs of growing persons determinative of all our educational procedures. 'I am come that they may have life and that they may have it abundantly,' said Jesus. It is easy to allow tradition or prejudice or love of ease to determine what sort of materials and teaching methods shall be used. Our ideal is for all leaders in the educational program of the church to 'save their lives by losing them,' to be willing to modify any cherished plan for the sake of more effectiveness in the development of Christlike personalities. The teacher in this movement is an interpreter of the pupil's experience, a sharer of experience with the pupil, a guide. This principle applies to the teacher of little children as well as to the one who guides the adults.

"The tendency in some circles to make religion the one field of experience from which guidance shall be barred until the person is eighteen or more is fraught with peril to the moral fabric of any race. More religion as a motive force in character training and



more educational content in the development of the religious personality are both imperatively needed in our age.

"Third, we pledge ourselves to do everything in our power to develop mutual understanding, good will and a spirit of brotherhood on the part of all the racial groups around the world. We recognize that the best way to bring this about is to make our own home, church and business life Christlike, then to work so that every aspect of our community, national and international relationships, shall express the ideals of service as exemplified by Jesus Christ.

"Fourth, we pledge ourselves to be earnest, open-minded seekers for the truth as it relates to all the problems of life. We know that Jesus gave to the world eternal principles rather than specific rules for conduct, and that it is our task to study diligently how these principles should be worked out in the concrete situations of our day. In the world-wide movement to secure temperance, economic justice, better business ethics, and the wholesome use of leisure time, together with other great welfare movements, we pledge our tireless effort and loyal service."<sup>1</sup>

Such are some of the aims of leaders who represent a constituency of many millions. After years of research and painstaking effort in committee the International Council adopted a statement of goals. The major objectives follow but each of these has been analyzed in more minute detail.

- "I. Religious education seeks to foster in growing persons a consciousness of God as a reality in human experience, and a sense of personal relationship to him.
- "II. Religious education seeks to develop in growing persons such an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life and teaching of Jesus as will lead to experience of him as Savior and Lord, loyalty to him and his cause, and manifest itself in daily life and conduct.
- "III. Religious education seeks to foster in growing persons a progressive and continuous development of Christlike character.
- "IV. Religious education seeks to develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in and contribute constructively to the building of a social order throughout

<sup>1</sup> *Go . . . Teach*—"The Report of the Quadrennial Convention of The International Council of Religious Education," Toronto, Canada, 1930. Pg. 104, 105.

the world, embodying the ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

- "V. Religious education seeks to develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in the organized society of Christians—the church.
- "VI. Religious education seeks to lead growing persons into a Christian interpretation of life and the universe, the ability to see in it God's purpose and plan; a life philosophy built on this interpretation.
- "VII. Religious education seeks to effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, as effective guidance to present experience." <sup>2</sup>

Such are the goals stated in general terms. An amplification of these may be found in Bulletin No. 101 of The International Council of Religious Education and also in *Objectives in Religious Education*.<sup>3</sup> Some leaders would prefer a different phraseology for certain of the objectives and a different treatment of some of the details; but on the whole they represent goals to which the forty-two denominations coöperating in the Council have officially set their seal. As the movement develops the statements will need revision, but the major objectives have really not changed since the days of Jesus and Saint Paul. Briefly summarized they call for a God-inspired, Christlike life, working out individually and in all social relationships the ideals of Jesus. But we are facing the future. The Church looks ahead and is asking for our aid in appraising the possibilities of religious education for the future.

### *"Religious" or "Christian" Education?*

Perhaps it would be well for us to pause here and note the discussion which centers about the use of the phrase "Religious Education" instead of "Christian Education." It is entirely possible that The International Council of Religious Education may change its name to The International Council of Christian Edu-

<sup>2</sup> See *The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education*, "Educational Bulletin No. 101," Revised 1930. Pg. 38-46. Published by The International Council of Religious Education.

<sup>3</sup> Vieth.

cation. A definite move for a constitutional change to this effect has been started. However, a change in name, if it comes, will not change the ideals and program of this interdenominational body. It has no aim except to serve the churches of Jesus Christ in the promotion of adequate teaching methods for the Christianization of this world.

"Christian Education" has long been used as a name for the movement to develop under church auspices institutions of higher learning: "Religious Education" came into being to denote a special aspect of education which was being neglected to some extent in general education by the public schools and tax-supported institutions of higher learning. The aim of the pioneers and followers who made the phrase "Religious Education" popular, was to call attention to the importance of religion as one of the factors in the development of growing persons. To most of these pioneers "Religious Education" and "Christian Education" were synonymous. However, the situation has changed until there is almost general recognition of the value of some form of religious instruction in character education. At the same time all of the great religions are trying to use educational methods and the term, "Religious Education," in this land as well as abroad, may properly be claimed by Ethical Culture, Judaism, Mohammedanism, Christianity and many other real or so-called religions. In this discussion we are dealing with the movement for religious education as promoted by the Protestant Churches of Jesus Christ.

### *Protestant and Roman Catholic Programs of Teaching*

In facing the future the question is not—to teach or not to teach—but, how shall we teach? Is there a future for the theories, materials and technics of Christian education as promoted by the major Protestant bodies of Christian Church? The Roman Catholic and other denominations called "Catholic" also have their programs for teaching the young and old. The former is entitled to our admiration for the steadfast persistence with which she has maintained the necessity for the adequate

teaching of her children. However, her ideal is a church-controlled parochial day-school which would make a public school system both unnecessary and undesirable for Roman Catholic children. The Protestants, on the other hand, in theory as well as in practice, support heartily the public schools and state universities while they seek to work out a program of religious education which will supplement the general education given by the tax-supported institutions.

The Sunday school was the forerunner of the present movement for religious education and is still, in numbers and influence, its most important factor. In order to emphasize week-day as well as Sunday instruction, the name has been changed by many churches in recent years to the name church school. The church school may hold week-day as well as Sunday sessions. It may also conduct a vacation school for a few weeks during the Summer holiday. The young people's societies, such as the Christian Endeavor and the Epworth League, and, in short, all of the organizations whose tasks are primarily educational, are supposed to be vitally related to the school system or church school of a particular local church. However, one cannot understand the religious education movement as it pertains to the local church without knowing a great deal about the history of the Sunday school from the days of Robert Raikes to the present.

### *Development of the Sunday School*

Obviously it is impossible as well as undesirable to try to give that history in this brief chapter. We can, however, call attention to some of the most significant aspects of this development. The Sunday schools organized by Robert Raikes were for poor children and were religious in the sense that they used religious materials such as the Bible to teach reading, writing, good manners and the like. When the Raikes' idea was transplanted into America it soon grew to be very different from a plan for "pauper schools." Outside of the South the early colonists of the United States believed in educating

the children of rich and poor at public schools whether these were public schools, as in New England, or parochial schools, as in the Middle Colonies. Hence there was never any considerable opposition to the Sunday school on the ground that only the poor should be taught religion in free common schools. The strongest opposition in the early days in America came from the indifference or hostility of ministers who saw in this institution a possible rival to the preaching service. Discerning students will recognize that some traces of this hostility still exist, although for almost a century the great majority of the ministers have been cordial supporters even though they may have had their "doubts and fears."

*Relation of "Sunday" or "Church" School to Public School*

Another item to keep in mind is the fact that the Sunday school, later called the church school, as an institution has kept very close to the public school in its basic educational theories and in its educational methods. This statement will be challenged by some who compare very unfavorably the backward work of many church and Sunday schools with the efficiency of excellent public schools. We readily admit the truth in these comparisons but such truth does not disprove the close dependence of the church school upon the public school and the eagerness of the leaders of the former for a century to take over every approved educational theory and every significant improvement in teaching methods. The Sunday school could never have enjoyed so rapid a development had not the rise of a system of free, tax-supported public schools become so general in the first half of the nineteenth century. These community schools were necessarily free from any sectarian instruction but unnecessarily, as some of us believe, kept too free from direct religious instruction. They therefore compelled the churches to go into the school business in one form or another.

Futhermore, the public schools of the first half of the last century were not so advanced in educational theory nor so efficient in method as many unthinking ones suppose. The

normal schools which were just getting under way by 1840, were opposed by the public school teachers themselves as a reflection upon their ability. Only eleven state normal schools were in existence by 1860, but by this time they had gloriously vindicated themselves.<sup>4</sup> The movement for teacher training in the Sunday schools also made a hopeful beginning from 1840 to 1860, and immediately after the conclusion of the Civil War teacher training, under the leadership of John H. Vincent, B. F. Jacobs and others, made remarkable progress.

The methods today used in the best public schools growing out of the experiments of recent years, are paralleled in the best church schools of the world and are little used in the backward public schools of the same countries. The church school movement in the United States has attained no such heights of efficiency as the other, but her leaders have not been at all slow to experiment and adopt the latest educational principles and methods.

The greatest difference between the two lies in the skill of their teaching staffs, in their equipment and in their other resources. One has gradually built up a great company of teachers and administrative officers who are justly proud of their profession and are moving steadily forward to improve themselves and their work. Though inadequately paid and too little appreciated by the citizens whose children are being guided by them, their spirit and their success have been on the whole marvelous. The other movement has grown up largely on a voluntary part-time basis. Teachers have been able to give only marginal time to their work and too little of that has ever been given to careful training for their educational tasks. Their physical equipment has been too often even worse than their skill. The torture devised by the Egyptians when they compelled the Hebrews to "make bricks without straw," seems to have been approved by a host of governing boards of local churches whose members have expected a fine product in intelligence and character with

<sup>4</sup> See Cubberly, *Public Education in the United States*. Pg. 293.

an expenditure of very little time or money. More than once outstanding Christian leaders have given up in despair any hope of ever making the Sunday school an effective instrument in religious education; but these same leaders have come back to it with new hope and stronger determination. Admitting all of its delinquencies, the Sunday school has put the world eternally in its debt. Millions of men and women at work in all quarters of the globe owe their knowledge of Jesus Christ, their disposition and ability to serve Him, to their training received in the Sunday school.

However, the whole story is not told if we simply pronounce encomiums upon a handicapped institution. We must face the future and ask whether or not the handicaps are too great to give us any assurance of success for the church school of the morrow. In any great institution or movement no permanent advance is possible until the leaders are first trained. Discerning students of education will inquire diligently about the on-coming leadership in religious education before they predict success or failure.

### *Leaders, Past, Present and in the Making*

We have already spoken about the leadership having been on a part-time voluntary basis; but all of it has not been so. John H. Vincent, the most creative Sunday school leader of the last century, gave practically all of his time to an educational ministry until he was made a bishop by his denomination. Kidder, Pardee, B. F. Jacobs, Blackall, Hurlbut, Reynolds, Hamill and others, had at times other duties than Sunday school promotion, but they gave so much of their attention to this work that they were to all intents and purposes professional leaders. B. F. Jacobs was a business man but a dominating personality in the movement. Coming into the first quarter of the present century we should add such names as those of Mary Woodbridge Barnes, Marion Lawrance, Frank L. Brown, Hugh S. Magill, and others.

The number of full-time professional workers has grown with increasing rapidity in the last two to three decades. Early in this century professors of philosophy, of psychology, of Bible, of education and of other fields began to take a great interest in the necessity and the possibilities for a more effective program of religious education. Under the leadership of George Albert Coe, George Henry Cope and others, the Religious Education Association came into being ready to encourage research, experimentation and promotion in this field. Growing out of this new interest came a reawakening on the part of the denominations. Before, they were interested too exclusively in the preparation and sale of Sunday school literature, leaving the promotion of improved methods in their schools to voluntary agencies such as the state and provincial associations of the International Sunday School Association. The larger denominations, in addition to their editorial staffs, created staffs to deal not only with the promotion of new schools in "missionary" territory but also to take responsibility for creation, experimentation and for the promotion of better educational methods.

The newer technics of religious education and the rising tide of interest created a demand on the part of the church-going public which was answered by the creating of Departments of Religious Education, first in theological seminaries, and later in other graduate schools and colleges. This gained some momentum in the second decade of this century and after the World War the number of such departments increased rapidly. As a result we have today a large and ever-growing number of Christian ministers trained in the modern theories and technics of religious education, as well as a relatively small but growing company of men and women who are professionally competent to serve as teachers and directors in this field. Were it not for the economic depression which began in the fall of 1929, and the falling incomes of church boards of benevolence for several preceding years, the number of full-time lay workers in religious education would be much greater. Colleges and graduate schools have been preparing such for several years and when



the churches are ready to begin expanding on a large scale their week-day church schools or to add paid workers to their staffs of voluntary teachers on Sunday, they will find an ample supply of professionally trained young people ready to take up these tasks.

In other words the number is growing steadily and the average ability of the full-time leadership in this field is improving on such a scale that from this standpoint the future of religious education is very much brighter than ever before. Another very significant feature of this movement for training in institutions of higher learning is the fact that many more students are studying the material and technics of religious education in these institutions today than ten years ago or ever before that time. Most of these men and women will become the lay community leaders of tomorrow as well as the home builders of the future. It is reasonable to suppose that they will give more generous and intelligent support to the movement than any previous generation has done. They will also increase the number of trained volunteer workers who are teaching on Sunday.

The local churches are placing more and more dependence upon the college-trained young people who come into their churches. However, they recognize the necessity for operating training programs of their own in addition to the training offered in colleges and universities. The popular movement for leadership training has reached no such dimensions as we may hope for in the future, and yet it has reached the status of a significant advance. One denomination, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, reported a total of 72,759 credits awarded in Leadership Training during the year 1929. (58,472 Standard Credits.)<sup>5</sup> The Director of Leadership Training of The International Council of Religious Education reported a total of 122,317 "Standard Credits" awarded by all agencies reporting to him for the year 1930.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Year Book of The General Sunday School Board*, 1930. Pg. 66.

<sup>6</sup> *Year Book of The International Council of Religious Education*, 1930. Pg. 77.

*Some Criticisms of Religious Education*

We have dealt at length with the development of leaders in religious education because so many people are tempted to appraise the possibilities of the future without a careful examination of the quality of the oncoming leaders. The hostile, not the sympathetic, critics of the movement are apt to take one of three positions. Some will say that the development of a school system in the local church is unnecessary if not undesirable; that more emphasis upon preaching, Bible reading, testifying and prayer will give the Christian movement all the power that it needs and sufficient information. They look upon the erection of educational parish houses, the training of teachers in the fields of psychology, pedagogy and other subjects, the introduction of graded curricula, including worship, study and activities, as misspent energy. Another group will characterize as ridiculous the attempts to make the program of the local church efficient in any sense comparable to the public school program of the same community. A third unsympathetic group of critics will say that the present leaders in religious education have gone mad over experimentation; that they have become so obsessed with the idea and so thrilled by interest in their own experiments that they have neither the time nor the program to make their ideals attainable by any except a few favored churches.

We will not attempt to answer other than briefly these critics and it may be well for us to admit the grains of truth in what they say. Preaching, Bible reading without the aid of a teacher, testifying to one's Christian experience, and prayer have in themselves greater educational possibilities than many realize. The wise leader in religious education accepts all of these as valuable and tries to utilize, not to ignore them.

The last word has not yet been said to the second group. We can, however, point to the fact that in communities which have efficient public schools of the most modern type, will usually be found some church schools meeting on Sunday, on week days

or in vacation time, perhaps using all three forms of school work, which are quite as efficient in one field, religion, as the public schools are in mathematics, literature, history and other fields of their curriculum.

The third group have some facts with which to support their contention but to workers in religious education the facts are encouraging rather than discouraging. Every forward-looking school system encourages experimentation but of course the experimentation must not be overdone. Much of the time must be given to the use of well-tested methods even while experiments in newer methodology are being carried on. "Creative education" is just as much the ideal in the church schools as it is in advanced public schools. "Projects" or "units of experience" are explored and developed in the church school curriculum as well as in the public school curriculum. Of course it is not difficult to find many church school officers and teachers who will have nothing to do with the "new-fangled notions." But anyone who is sensitive to public criticism throughout the country, will find literally thousands of communities in which new features in the public school are condemned as "fads" and other thousands of schools where the newer ideals have modified but little the methods of teaching in the last twenty-five years.

### *Present and Future Tendencies*

The future of religious education in the churches of Jesus Christ is no more uncertain than is the future of Christianity itself. Christianity began in a school, the "School of the Twelve," and it will carry with it to the end of time some sort of a school program. If we can assume that the schools, colleges and universities around the world will increase in popularity during the next quarter century, it is safe to assume that the school system of the Christian Church, including church schools, colleges and universities, will also grow in favor and influence. Unless, perchance, interest in Christianity itself should wane, it is inconceivable that there should be any wan-

ing of interest in the teaching method of guiding the development of persons who aspire to become Christlike. A study of the trends of church architecture during the past ten years will show that those who have invested in great church plants have apparently pinned their faith to two movements—one to exalt public worship of which preaching is a part, and the other to provide adequate teaching facilities for young and old. The adult education movement has greater possibilities for the churches than most people realize, and the necessity for the religious training of childhood and youth is being appreciated more intensely throughout the world.

Religious education has little to fear from its enemies. The ongoing of the tide of interest in education as a method of developing human power seems to be irresistible. But religious education does need to be saved from some of its friends who are tempted to claim too much efficacy for some new technic and to give too little attention to the educational resources in the religious experiences of the past and present, for example, such resources as lie in the Bible and a great mass of materials which give a true account of the religious development of the race.

In looking backward over a hundred and fifty years of history one could trace the following aims: the elimination of illiteracy together with the improvement of morals and manners (Raikes), "conversion" and "learning the Bible,"<sup>7</sup> the winning and training recruits for Jesus Christ, and the development of God-inspired, Christlike persons who can make society Christian. In a very real sense these aims have changed little while the methods of achieving them have changed greatly. All efforts to state aims briefly are apt to be unsatisfactory; nevertheless, they may be illuminating. Phrases which appear frequently in recent discussions of educational aims and methods are "creative education," a "pupil-centered program," an "experience-centered curriculum" and the like. These phrases

<sup>7</sup> See Brown, *History of Religious Education in Recent Times*. Pg. 63, 64.

call attention to the effort to guide the development of a person by trying to lead him to discover and interpret his present needs. In some circles of general education conduct seems to receive all of the attention, while in most Christian educational circles conduct is recognized as a supreme test of one's character but not as the only vital factor in the formation of such a character. Worship, information, reflective thinking and other items are recognized as powerful factors even in the determining of conduct. The teachers of religion in the church school make much use of graded worship in order to carry out programs which actually express the devotional life of each age group. They do not believe that all worship must be graded but that training in this activity should be graded just as carefully as materials for study are graded.

So much is being said today about the necessity for a "pupil-centered" rather than a "material-centered" curriculum that some have expressed fear lest a study of the Bible and other source materials will be slighted. There is little danger of this in the minds of the leaders. Someone has said, "A man's conduct cannot be better than his information." Occasionally this statement may not be true, but over a period of years one's conduct will be determined largely by what he knows. Clear thinking, careful discrimination and sound judgment based upon accurate and adequate information, are required as much as ever before; hence, the church school is trying to meet this need. From kindergarten to graduate school, in religious as well as in general education, constant revisions of methods are being made in order to develop greater initiative in the student and more use of his newly acquired information. It has been readily discovered that information sought to meet some interest or need in the present experience of the student receives far more attention and stimulates much more thinking than knowledge learned simply because some teacher assigned it to him as "the next lesson."

We have already outlined some of the steps of progress and some of the resources for training leaders. The standards of

training for such leaders are being raised constantly. Of the utmost significance is the tendency to train these leaders coöperatively. The colleges and graduate schools have workers from many denominations in the same classes. Community training schools are receiving more and more support from denominational leaders. Periods of financial depression handicap the movement but they also bring some benefits in that they require the churches to investigate ways and means of eliminating waste, either of funds or time. It does not require any prophetic insight to predict with reasonable certainty a substantial development of coöperative enterprises for leadership training in the next twenty-five years. Many such enterprises are now under way and more are in prospect.

### *Week-day and Vacation Schools*

Far-seeing leaders do not expect the Sunday services of education alone ever to meet adequately the world's need for Christian education in the local community. Despite the fact that many millions of children and older students are in the Sunday sessions of the church schools of Canada and the United States week after week, we seldom find a community in which as many as half of the children and young people are regularly receiving religious instruction. The disparity between public school and church school enrollments tells all too clearly the story. To make teaching in religion reach the entire public school constituency requires some arrangement with the school boards which will give the schools of religion at least a small share of the school day for their work. Usually the boards of education and the teachers are very happy to arrange their schedules so as to coöperate with the churches whenever the latter are prepared to offer a unified competent program of religious instruction.

Vacation schools have enjoyed a more rapid development in recent years than the week-day schools for obvious reasons, and there is a bright future for this institution which makes such a wise use of some of the students' summer vacation time. The

day is coming when an ever-increasing number of forward-looking communities will set up coöperatively through the churches some plan for both week-day and vacation schools of religion.

*Meeting a Permanent Human Need*

Religious education makes no claim to be a "cure-all" for the maladies of our civilization; it recognizes itself simply as one of the many factors which men and women with divine help are using to make a better world. However, its leaders do insist that as the human race becomes better educated in common and specialized branches of learning, it cannot achieve the highest moral goals if ignorant in the field of religion. "My theory of life is to do what I please, have a good time and let the rest of the world look out for themselves," was the frank statement of a recent college graduate at work in the business world. He is not as rare a specimen as society could wish. The public school world and the institutions of higher learning will do their best to give growing persons a better philosophy of life, but they will have a difficult, if not an impossible task unless the churches of Jesus Christ teach their religion so effectively that the oncoming generations will at least be intelligent about the life and teachings and power revealed to men through Jesus Christ. Christian people are beginning to recognize this fact and are determined to put into the movement for Christian education an ever increasing amount of study, money, service and prayer.

## IV

### EVANGELISM

CHARLES E. SCHOFIELD

CHRISTIANITY is distinctively an evangelistic religion. Beginning with a group of a dozen men gathered around the Master, it has spread until today its adherents constitute the most numerous religious group in the world. This growth has been characterized by wide fluctuations. There have been periods when evangelism was a flaming passion and the church spread like wild-fire. There have been periods when growth seemed practically to cease. In fact, under the impact of the first tempestuous attack of the followers of Mohammed Christendom lost ground. There are some serious-minded observers today who are saying that in the present generation organized Christianity is on the retreat. That remains a mooted question. We are too close to events to be able correctly to appraise them. But, taking the whole span of the life of the Christian movement into consideration, no religion that has yet appeared has so consistently maintained its evangelistic impetus.

#### I

The history of the Christian movement in the United States affords an illuminating study of the outworking of the evangelistic urge of the Gospel of Jesus. While churches were organized practically with the beginnings of colonization, organized Christianity did not at first keep pace with the development of other social institutions in the American colonies. While, from the beginning, the representatives of the church played highly influential parts in the life of the American



people, the proportion of the adult population actively identified with the Church was considerably smaller in the eighteenth century than it is today. The conditions of pioneer life, the break with old traditions and institutions involved in emigration and colonization, the character of a considerable element in the population of the first colonies—gentleman adventurers, indentured servants, debtors—the bitter prejudices and deeply entrenched intolerance that divided the religious life of colonial America, together with the fact that, from the beginning of colonization down to the close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the American people were almost constantly involved in war—altogether this goes far to account for the fact that so considerable a portion of the population remained outside the organized Christian church.

When we compare the religious situation in colonial America with conditions today, it appears that the organized Christian movement has made a very significant advance during the past two centuries. No reliable statistics are available until we reach the latter half of the period. But from 1800 on we have sufficient evidence to give us a fairly reliable comparison of the relation of the growth of the church to that of the general population. Since 1800 the population of the United States has multiplied twenty-two times. In the same period the membership in Protestant churches has multiplied eighty-one times. That is to say, the membership of the churches has increased almost four times as rapidly as has the general population. Practically all of this growth came, however, between 1800 and 1900. Since the turn of the century, the growth in the membership of the churches has remained practically equal to the increase in population. The Roman Catholic church registered similar large increases, especially during the period of unrestricted immigration, roughly extending from the close of the Civil War to the outbreak of the World War. Since the adoption of the policy of rigid immigration restriction, Roman Catholic increase has rather sharply declined. Roman Catholics today include thirty per cent of the total adult membership of

all the churches in the United States, as compared with thirty-four per cent twenty years ago.

Whether this slowing up of the rate of increase in church membership marks a real subsidence in the interest in and loyalty of the American people to organized Christianity is a warmly debated question. Numerous articles have recently appeared heralding the decadence of the church, and more particularly the passing of Protestantism. While the markedly evident bias that appears in most such discussions goes far to discredit the conclusions they offer, the drift of American life from sacred to secular interests is a fact that offers occasion for serious thought.

Dr. Charles Stelzle, in an article in *Current History* for October, 1930, points out four marks of the decline of American Protestantism: (1) the slowing up in growth of membership; (2) the relative decrease in Sunday School enrollment; (3) the decline in missionary giving; and (4) the apparent decline in the peculiar interest of women in the church. He sums up his conclusions in these words:

"A comparatively small percentage of the adult population are regular attendants at church service. While the people as a whole accept the doctrine which the church teaches, they do not accept the church itself. This is a world phenomenon which is even truer of European Protestantism than of Protestantism in America."

On the other hand, Dr. H. Paul Douglas, of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, in an article published in a recent number of *Current History*,<sup>1</sup> comes to a more optimistic conclusion. He points out that the combined membership of the churches of persons thirteen years of age and over includes approximately fifty-five per cent of the total population. He continues:

"The number of churches comes within one-tenth of equalling the number of public schools; Sunday School enrollment is only one-sixth smaller than public school enrollment and general church

<sup>1</sup> From a reprint in *The Federal Council Bulletin*, February, 1931.

expenditures come to forty per cent of expenditures for public education."

He concludes that

"There is not a shred of external evidence that the American people are tending to discard the church."

There is one point upon which there seems to be general agreement. While, taking the whole population and area of the United States into consideration, the church is still holding its own with population increase, in the rapidly growing urban centers it is at present losing ground. Dr. Douglas observes:

"It is in the Middletowns of America that churches are most conspicuously behind in the race with population."

Before we leap to too hasty conclusions as to the significance of this fact, we need to remember that the rapid growth of large urban centers represents the major population movement of America today. Until within the last generation, since the beginning of colonization, American life has been characterized by a steady and at times a torrential flow of population toward the frontier and the unsettled open spaces. Today that movement has practically ceased. In its stead the tides of population are swirling in great eddies about the urban centers of American industrial life. It is a common phenomenon that social institutions are always behind the first rush of great population changes. As Dr. Douglas has pointed out:

"Growth of church membership has not kept pace with population in cities of 25,000 and over; but neither have public school buildings, transportation systems, sewers and methods of city government in the same places. The abnormal growth—particularly of the smaller cities—has left virtually all social institutions behind." <sup>2</sup>

Given another generation with the urban drift continuing, as we have every reason to believe it will continue, and the organized church may very well readjust her program and evangelistic methods so as to reestablish the substantial advance that has

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*

characterized the two hundred years preceding. Here, without question, organized Christianity faces the most serious challenge of our day. If the Church is to continue to exert the determining influence over American civilization and the world's life that she has in the past, she must master the problem presented by the present drift of population toward urban industrial centers. She must not only discover effective methods of maintaining her institutional life in large centers of population; she must reassert her prophetic function and take the lead in forming the spirit and pattern of the new industrial society that is taking form in the United States. She must resolutely and courageously set out to master the machine technique that promises to demonate the mechanics of living in the future and inspire men to transform it into bones and sinews of the Great Society, the Kingdom of God. When we recall that Christianity first made its appearance and won its first victories in the large cities of the Roman Empire, that in its origin the word "pagan" meant "rural," we may take courage and feel confident that the spirit of the Gospel will again prove itself capable of capturing the modern city and setting the essential patterns of the civilization we are building today.

## II

The evangelistic program of the church in America has appeared to run somewhat in cycles. Dr. H. C. Weber, who has attempted a *Graphic Survey of Evangelism*, based on an analysis of the reported annual increases of the seven major Protestant denominations, reports that,

"Roughly speaking, there has been a cycle movement with a span of about twenty years with high points in 1866, 1876, 1906, and 1921; with a secondary rhythm about every ten years, in 1857, 1866, 1876, 1887, 1894, 1906, 1915, and 1921." \*

The first great period of aggressive evangelism in American life came in the lull between the close of the French and Indian

\* Pg. 183.

War and the opening of the American Revolution. It found expression through the efforts of Jonathan Edwards in New England, and George Whitefield who ranged up and down the entire length of the Atlantic seaboard. Following the Revolutionary War the evangelistic impetus of the churches marked time while new national organizations were being effected and colonial life was passing through the inevitable readjustment that follows a long war. As soon as peace was established the stream of immigration from the seaboard toward the frontier, which had been held up somewhat during the war, began to run full tide. Along with the caravans of emigrants went the circuit riders and itinerant preachers. The evangelism of the half-century following independence took the form of home missionary expansion, establishing organized religion in the new communities forming in the Ohio Valley, and laying spiritual foundations for the revival movement that was to be one of the most interesting and significant characteristics of eighteenth century religion in America.

The first wave of this revival enthusiasm came in 1832, under the preaching of Charles G. Finney, and ranged from the Ohio territory eastward through New York and into New England. In 1843 came the second wave of evangelistic enthusiasm. And 1857 saw the most famous revival period of the century. Following the Civil War the rate of increase in membership of the churches swept sharply upward in the 1860's, and again in the 1890's and again between 1900 and 1910, and again just before the outbreak of the World War. One of the most significant facts revealed by a study of the evangelistic record of the churches during the last century and a quarter is the fact that evangelism in America seems to have reached its peak in the revival of 1857. Each successive peak of increase in membership since that date for the Church as a whole has fallen below the one preceding.

In his analysis of the evangelistic history of the Church in America Dr. Weber attempts to discover the influences that both help and hinder the growth of the Church. Among the

forces that seem to operate to retard the growth of the Church, war easily takes first place. We have already observed that the long struggle between France and England for colonial empire and the war between the colonies and the mother country seriously interfered with the growth of the Church. It is significant that the first great revival movement in the last century did not come until nearly twenty years after the close of the second War with Great Britain. Similarly, the periods of the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish War, and the World War marked periods of decline in evangelistic progress. Dr. Weber's conclusion that war

"is like an internal blight spreading with inconceivable thoroughness over a harvest field of human hearts and reducing the area of possible response with depressing finality,"<sup>4</sup>

would appear to be well founded. Similarly, periods of acute industrial strife or theological controversy invariably slow up the growth of the church.

Among the most powerful influences stimulating the evangelistic growth of the church we must rank the impact of dynamic personalities. We have already mentioned the influence of the preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield in colonial America, and of Charles G. Finney in the first half of the last century. To these we must add the names of Dwight L. Moody in the latter half of the century and of William A. Sunday in the period just preceding the World War. Such general movements affecting the nation as a whole as the celebration of the centennial of American independence and the World's Fair in Chicago—movements that turned the attention of the people generally to wider interests than were represented in their immediate surroundings—coincide with periods of advance for the churches. Similarly such movements with the church as the young people's society movement of the 1890's, the laymen's movement following the turn of the century, and the interchurch movement immediately at the

<sup>4</sup> Pg. 97, 98.

close of the World War all registered significant increases in the membership of the churches.

### III

Until shortly before the outbreak of the World War the revival method was practically universally followed by the major portion of the Protestant churches. The Roman Catholic Church derived the greater portion of its increase, during the period between the Civil War and the World War, from the immigrants that poured in from southern and central Europe. Outside of this group the Roman Catholic Church, in common with the Protestant Episcopal and various Lutheran groups, depended upon confirmation classes and the training of children from homes within the church for increase in membership. But for the remainder of the Protestant groups the revival method very generally prevailed.

The revival movement in America had its inspiration in the Methodist revival in England. George Whitefield swept like wildfire the full length of the colonies during the generation just prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. After the Revolution the itinerant circuit riders carried the revival spirit with them over the mountains to the frontier settlements. Among the frontiersmen of Kentucky revivals took the form of camp-meetings. Thousands gathered from near and far to listen to the preaching of rough and ready evangelists and to join in the singing, praying and testifying of masses swept by whirlwinds of emotion. Later, as communities became established and the irresponsible chaos of the frontier settled down into ordered society the "protracted meeting" became the most essential part of the program of the established churches. Sometimes the pastor of the congregation, sometimes a visiting evangelist, did the preaching. The meeting continued regularly for six to ten or twelve weeks. In the larger centers of population the Whitefield tradition carried on. Preachers like Charles G. Finney and Dwight L. Moody drew throngs that packed the largest halls to hear their stirring messages. During the generation just pre-

ceding the World War it became the popular thing to erect great shed-like tabernacles for the accommodation of the crowds that came to hear the evangelist. The tabernacle type of evangelistic meeting reached the pinnacle of its development under William A. (Billy) Sunday, who attained the climax of his career just as America entered the World War.

While the revival movement developed a wide variety of methods, its essential characteristics became pretty well standardized by the opening of the last century. Large choruses, assisted by bands, orchestras, and a battery of pianos; the organization of all the religious forces that would cooperate in the community for cottage prayer meetings, personal invitation, and preliminary preaching meetings over a period of some weeks before the coming of the evangelist; the announcement of spectacular and dramatic sermon subjects, the generous use of denunciation of local iniquities together with scathing criticism of the established churches, played up with all the arts of the advertising and journalistic profession, parades, slight-of-hand tricks, vaudeville stunts—every device known to mass psychology contributed to swell the attendance. The development of the revival movement called forth a new type of song—"the gospel song"—a rag-time or jazz modification of the old hymn tunes, with syncopated melodies, words selected more for their rhythmic qualities than for their literary values, and catchy refrains. The evangelistic preaching of the revival movement covered a comparatively limited range of subjects. It dealt with the grosser sins—lust, intemperance, profanity, gambling, violence—characteristic of frontier communities. It based its appeal pretty heavily upon the need for repentance in order to prepare for judgment, escape hell and make sure of heaven. It emphasized the right of one who was saved to know by an inner mystical assurance the certainty of salvation. It was often embellished by lurid, fantastic and often grotesque detailed descriptions of the impending end of the world and second-coming of Christ. It made its emotional appeal effective by way



of skillfully selected illustrations emphasized by reiterated exhortations to seek salvation.

The professional evangelist of the tabernacle type gathered around him a more or less extensive staff of assistants. There were advance publicity men, supervisors of tabernacle construction, chorus leaders, musicians, leaders of work for men, women, and young people. As nearly as possible the entire life of the community, during the period of the revival, was centered in the revival. Its influence was carried into shops, factories, schools and business houses by deputation meetings conducted through the day. General mass meetings were held in the tabernacle, hall or church, every evening, often every afternoon, with at least three big meetings on Sunday. Methods of securing and registering decisions varied. Especially in the early "camp-meeting" period, the "mourners' bench" was widely used. Those who sought conversion went forward to kneel at an altar rail, or before the front benches, where they remained until, through prayer, exhortation, and singing they found the experience that they sought. Sometimes the seekers were asked to withdraw from the main congregation into an "inquiry room" where the evangelist or some of his assistants prayed with them and talked with them until the decision was secured. In the tabernacle period converts marched down the aisle, shook hands with the evangelist and signed cards stating their purpose to begin to live the Christian life. When the revival was carried on in a single church, either under the leadership of the pastor or of a visiting evangelist, essentially the same methods were employed. Under the revival method large numbers were swept into the churches. It was inevitable that a very considerable proportion of converts so won, later lost their enthusiasm and slipped back into their old ways. There can be no question, however, that the revival method wrought some remarkable transformations of character, both in single individuals and in whole communities. However it may appeal to us today, it was in key with the spirit of the society in which it developed. It

gave a religious expression to the spirit of adventure, of ruthless struggle and mastery, both of external natural forces and internal passions, that characterized frontier life.

## IV

Today the revival movement, as our fathers knew it, is clearly on the wane. It is easy to understand some of the factors that entered into its success and some of the reasons for its decline. The revival in America won its greatest successes in frontier communities, or communities not far removed from frontier conditions. Social opportunities were limited. The camp-meetings in the first half of the last century, and the protracted meetings that were so characteristic of the average American rural community during the latter half of the century, were the chief social events of the year. The meetings of such evangelists as Finney, Moody, and Sunday were not only the climax of the religious life of the time, they were the biggest show in town as well. The multiplication of social opportunities that the last thirty years have brought have provided a wide variety of thrills and forms of entertainment for those elements of the population not particularly interested in religion that once came to a revival for the entertainment and excitement that it offered.

Some of the methods employed by revivalists have tended to discredit evangelistic appeals of that type in the popular mind. The elaboration of staff and program pushed the costs of evangelism, especially of the tabernacle type, to the point where single campaigns cost into the tens of thousands of dollars. Other evangelists operating through single churches or groups of churches appeared at times more concerned with the size of the offering at the close than with the spiritual results of their efforts. Methods used in securing converts, marshalling people in droves to the altar, indiscriminate card-signing, padding of reports of converts won by such evangelists in publicity material, together with the tragic losses that followed the subsidence of the enthusiasm and excitement of the campaign, led

many to question the genuineness and value of converts won by such methods. The exaggerated attempts at spectacle and display, the coarse, blustering harangue and irresponsible denunciation that became almost the typical patter of professional evangelists, together with a narrow intolerance of all other methods of seeking and securing religious experience differing from that advocated by the evangelist awakened popular scepticism of the genuineness and sincerity of evangelistic preaching generally. Carl Sandburg's ruthless exposé of "A Contemporary Bunkshooter" voices an opinion held among large numbers of people both within and without the churches.

These criticisms apply more directly to the aberrations of revivalism. There is no question that, after all due allowance is made for whatever sham and insincerity may have been involved in the methods of some revivalists, the great majority of evangelists, preachers and laymen, who led in the revival movement were thoroughly sincere and devoted to the church. They sought in the most effective way they knew to present the challenge of the Gospel to their generation. They may not have understood the subtle and powerful forces that move crowds to action, as we have been taught to understand them by modern psychology. But they were persuaded that they knew God. They felt impelled by the Spirit of God to win men to the Gospel. And the story of their labor and achievement is part of the epic of Christian progress.

There are some other factors, however, that have entered into the situation that have affected the whole revival movement and go far toward accounting for its declining power today. Up until the opening of the controversy over evolution, practically everyone in the average community shared in a common understanding of what the issues were which the Gospel represented, what religion involved in the way of personal experience, and what was expected of a man, both in personal experience and in social conduct, who sought religion. As we have already observed, evangelistic preaching centered attention upon a rather limited list of vices to be shunned. While

the term "psychology of religion" was yet to be coined, both those within and those outside the church shared a common conception of what should happen when a man "got religion." Those who came to the revival knew quite definitely what they were seeking when they sought conversion. They knew quite definitely what changes in their habits and conduct would be expected of them after they "experienced religion." The pattern for religious experience and for Christian conduct was quite sharply defined. This, in part, accounts for the narrow range of content in the traditional evangelistic message. The prime requisite in the revival was to generate the emotional enthusiasm necessary to break down the resistance of old habits and fire the will for new decisions. Knowing the background it is easy to understand the phenomenal success of the revival method.

Today the situation has radically altered. Instead of a commonly accepted pattern of experience and conduct most men and women are vastly confused both as to the psychological form that a genuine religious experience may take and as to the moral content of a decision for Christ. The psychological study of religious experience has so far been largely critical and analytic. It leaves one with a large question whether the whole process may not, after all, prove to be a form of auto-hypnosis or pure wishful mental illusion. We have yet to arrive at a satisfactory synthesis of what we have learned about the inner functioning of personality, particularly as this applies to religious experience. The amazing rapidity with which modern industrialism has transformed both the material environment and the mechanisms of living has fairly smothered us with complex problems of human behavior never before faced by mankind. We are being compelled to reckon with new issues, or old issues in new forms, which the Gospel raises as we seek to give expression to the Spirit of Jesus in modern industrial society. In particular, we are being forced to reckon with the infinitely complex social implications of ideals that we have been accustomed to think of as inherently individual and per-

sonal in their application. While the church has made considerable progress toward a definition and understanding of the social implications of the Gospel, and the ethical challenge with which the Gospel confronts modern society, there is today nothing like the unanimity of understanding of what constitutes Christian living which our fathers knew. Along with the insistent clamor of social and economic questions we have to reckon, today, with a radical reorientation of the basic philosophy of the average man. The implications of scientific principles and method are beginning to make themselves felt in the thinking of the average "man in the street." Under the glamour of a new scientific terminology he is beginning to speak and think in a new vernacular that renders most of the traditional terms of the theology that has underlain evangelistic preaching an unknown tongue. When the traditional evangelist exhorts the average man outside the church today he uses words and phrases and figures of speech that do not make contact with the language in which his hearers are accustomed to describe their everyday experience. It is little wonder that they can get very little notion from what he says of what religion is really all about. It is little wonder that the evangelistic appeal, phrased in traditional terms, has largely lost its force.

## V

Leaders in the churches have long since become aware that the revival movement seems to have spent its force and have been searching for other methods to take its place. The development of the educational program of the Church in the last generation began to fix attention upon education as a method of evangelism. The older revivalists were never satisfied until they had included a "Decision Day" service in the Sunday school in the revival program. The religious education leaders have insisted that such decisions should be lifted out of the setting of abnormal emotional excitement and integrated with the developing life of the child in a consistent and sustained educational program in the Church. This has been the method

followed all along by such bodies as the Roman Catholic, Protestant Episcopal and Lutheran Churches. Other churches added membership training classes and began to standardize the educational evangelistic appeal by fixing Palm Sunday and Easter as the days when the educational forces should come to fruit in formal decisions and receptions into the membership of the church.

At the same time that the churches most given to revivalism were beginning to cultivate the educational method, the Roman and Protestant Episcopal Churches began to develop definite evangelistic preaching programs. Evangelistic preaching is not a novelty in the Roman Catholic Church. The Franciscan and Dominican friars of medieval days were itinerant evangelists as were many of the Jesuits who came later. But during the last century the Roman Catholic Church in America has developed a new impetus for evangelistic preaching. The Paulist Fathers, a new order organized in 1858, have taken the lead in conducting preaching missions directed particularly toward the conversion of Protestants to the Roman Catholic Church. Their work, which has studiously avoided the spectacular forms taken by Protestant revivalism and centered attention mainly upon preaching and personal interviews, has met with a wide degree of success. Similar preaching missions have been attempted by the Protestant Episcopal and other Protestant churches.

The most significant recent development in evangelistic method is what is generally referred to as "visitation evangelism." In a sense there is nothing novel about this method. To a certain extent it has been followed throughout the Church all through its history. Those who have been most zealous in advocating its use insist that it is a return to the original method of Jesus. As Jesus himself, through personal interviews, won his first disciples, so does the Church today seek, through personal interviews, to win new disciples. As Jesus sent out the disciple, first the twelve and then the seventy, "two by two," so do the evangelistic visitors, following the visitation plan, go two by two to talk to men about Christ and the Church. The

plan has been followed by single churches under the direction of the pastor, and it has been adapted to a campaign covering a large city, uniting workers from a large group of churches and directed by a staff of professional leaders. The plan, on the face of reports at least, seems to bring fully as large returns in converts won, as the old revival method. The relative permanence of decision won by the visitation and revival methods is a debated question. We probably must wait for longer experience in the application of the visitation plan to furnish evidence for valid conclusions.

In one sense the visitation plan of evangelism is only a development of the personal pastoral ministry. The essential characteristics of the plan are the enlistment of teams of laymen to visit under the direction of an experienced leader, and visiting with the single definite objective of winning men and women for Christ. The evangelistic visitation is sometimes preceded by an organized house-to-house religious survey to gather information concerning the persons who should be interviewed on behalf of the Church. Sometimes the visitation is planned in connection with public meetings for evangelistic preaching. Sometimes the visitation is carried forward without such public meetings. The typical visitation campaign runs from one to three weeks, usually preceded by a similar period of organization and preparation. The pioneers in the development of the visitation plan have been at work for ten or fifteen years. Already the plan has won sufficient favor that large organizations employing a considerable staff of assistants are in the field. Within the last five or six years the number of men offering their services as leaders in such campaigns has been increasing.

A careful study of the results of the visitation type of evangelistic appeal reveals some of the conditions that affect its success. For one thing, success clearly depends upon the degree of care used in selecting and training the lay visitors employed. For another thing the success of the visitation plan depends upon the vitality of the program carried on throughout the year by the churches on behalf of whom the appeal is made. For still

another thing, the converts won come, for the most part, from those who have already been drawn within the circle of influence of the churches. There is no question that the visitation approach will reach and win many persons to whom the traditional revival method makes no appeal. The emphasis that the visitation plan places upon the churches seriously undertaking to face their full evangelistic responsibility, the emphasis that it places upon defining this responsibility in terms of particular individuals to be won, the peculiar characteristics of the individuals sought and the emphasis that it places upon the active sharing of the laymen with the minister of the responsibility for the evangelization of the community has been a wholesome corrective of some trends that were becoming characteristic of the older evangelistic method. As a part of a well articulated program for the Church, the visitation plan should become a permanent feature in the life of the modern church. It offers a most effective way of crystallizing in formal decisions the year-through teaching and preaching ministry of the Church. The use of visitation methods should add immeasurably to the effectiveness of any evangelistic preaching program. But there are good reasons for believing that it can never eliminate the need for and value of evangelistic preaching.

The most recent development in the way of evangelistic method is the use of the radio to broadcast the message of the Gospel. There is no way of tabulating the full total of time given by the many local broadcasting stations to broadcast religious services and religious addresses. The nation-wide chain networks include in their regular programs many religious features. The Federal Council of Churches and the Greater New York Federation of Churches sponsor three hours each Sunday afternoon that are relayed through from thirty to nearly fifty local stations. In addition, many local stations broadcast regularly church services from leading churches in their constituent territory. Devotional services are broadcast from innumerable stations every morning and programs definitely religious in character appear frequently through the week. "Sunday Eve-



ning at Seth Parker's" has become almost a national institution. In addition to sermons and addresses on religious subjects, question periods are included in which questions sent into the broadcasting station are answered. Dr. Cadman's forum hour and the Sunday afternoon National Youth Conference presided over by Dr. Daniel A. Poling have been most widely heard. The Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches regularly sponsor radio programs featuring both sermons and question periods. The establishment of the giant radio broadcasting station at the Vatican is indicative of the possibilities the radio offers for the evangelistic program of the church. While it is true that radio evangelism does not offer opportunity for registering immediate decisions and accessions to Church membership, there can be no doubt that the radio places in the hands of the Church a tremendously effective means of preaching a definitely evangelistic message. There is probably no medium available today that actually reaches more of the unchurched masses than the radio. Supplemented by persistent friendly visiting, coupled with a vital program of Christian ministry on the part of the churches in the community, the radio ought to prove to be a tremendously effective agency of evangelism.

## VI

There can be no question that the period of traditional revivalism has reached its term. This does not mean, however, that evangelistic preaching has definitely passed out of the program of the Church. Nor does it mean that we must conclude that we need not look in the future for any more such mass movements into the churches as characterized the revival at the height of its power. Least of all are we justified in concluding, as some have hastily done, that the declining rate of increase in membership of the churches marks an ebb in the tide of religious interest and portends the ultimate decay of the Church. On the other hand we shall only add to the confusion in popular thinking and impede the progress of the Church if we waste time bewailing the passing of the "old time revival" and mak-

ing frantic and futile efforts to reproduce the superficial forms of revival emotionalism. We need candidly to recognize the changed conditions under which the Church today must work, and earnestly seek the most effective methods that we can discover to present to our neighbors the challenge and appeal of the Gospel of Jesus.

The extent to which advertising has seized upon the radio as an effective medium of crying the wares of the world's trade is sufficient evidence that there is no medium of appeal for decisions and action that can compare with that of the human voice. It further indicates that mass appeal continues to be tremendously effective. In fact many students of social trends are inclined to believe that American life in the future will be characterized by less individual initiative and more collective action. There is crying need, therefore, for developing a new type of evangelistic preaching. Amid the chaos of popular thinking and the confusion of clamoring rival philosophies the hearts of men hunger for a message that carries the ring of reality and the authority of valid experience. We need to remind ourselves that all effective preaching consists essentially in leading men to face the issues which the Gospel raises today and pressing upon them the need for immediate decision and enlistment. This is the point of Dr. Charles Stelzle's statement in October, 1930, *Current History* that:

"There is no doubt that what is needed more than anything else is a great prophetic message which will stir the church to its foundations. Nothing less heroic than a new voice with a great challenge can stir the Protestant Church."

It is a commonplace to remark that the Church today is passing through a period of critical readjustment, both in her thinking and in her program. And not only the Church, but the unchurched as well, are facing essentially the same sort of critical readjustment. The appearance of such a book as Walter Lippmann's *Preface to Morals*, clearly indicates that those who have felt constrained to break with the Church are beginning to

reckon seriously with the consequences of their unbelief. The passing of a consciousness of the seriousness of sin, which many observers of religious tendencies today note with alarm, is only a part of the general confusion into which all popular thinking relative to ultimate issues has fallen. When the Church preaches a message clearly defining the issues the Gospel raises in life today, phrased in the language of popular experience and thinking and fired by a conviction of the reality of the spiritual experience which the Church proposes to share, its appeal will meet with an eager response.

We may feel fairly justified in believing that the evangelistic method of the future, whatever the details of form it may take, will be more intelligently directed, with a clearer understanding, both of the character of the problem it proposes to meet and the method by which it shall proceed. The Church will plan her appeal to the unchurched masses with a clearer understanding of the sociological and psychological processes by which men, singly and in numbers, are moved to action. She will increasingly consolidate her forces for the evangelistic approach—both by denominational union and by increasing cooperation between different congregations in the community. She will increasingly attempt definitely to face the problem of winning every individual in her constituency to conscious and whole-hearted discipleship to Jesus. She will make use of the radio, the press, the pulpit, the classroom, personal man-to-man visitation, the movements of crowds and the solitary brooding of individuals—every agency that may be developed in modern life to press persuasively and effectively the appeal of the Gospel. Serenely confident that in the Spirit of Jesus she possesses the one thing that alone is adequate to bring richness and completeness of personal experience and to integrate human society in effective fellowship and cooperation, she will courageously and adventurously lay siege to souls and to society. The signs multiply that the world is moving toward a new spiritual awakening that will find one of the forms of its expression in a new epoch of evangelistic advance.

## V

### THE CURE OF SOULS

FRED WINSLOW ADAMS

DISEASE demands diagnosis. When Marcellus said to Horatio that there was "something rotten in the state of Denmark," he voiced universal experience. One has but to substitute for Denmark his own community and all men understand. But the Minister of the Good News of Jesus cannot allow himself to be handicapped by Hamlet's pessimism over conditions.

"The time is out of joint:—O cursed spite  
That ever I was born to set it right!"<sup>1</sup>

Rather he must rise to his task as to a supreme opportunity, and thank God for his heritage, that ever he was called to speak for Christ in such an age!

The task to which the Christian minister has been called to address himself is that of the "cure of souls." Theologically, the disease to be cured may be called sin; psychologically it may be defined in terms of inhibitions and complexes; physiologically, in terms of organic and functional disorders; and socially in terms of injustice and special privilege. But as here used the term, "cure of souls," while by no means excluding, must be dissociated from the technical work of healing, such as has been admirably treated in recent books by such authorities as Doctors Worcester, McComb, Lichliter and others.<sup>2</sup> The term "cure of souls" is used in its broader significance of applying not to a

<sup>1</sup> Hamlet. I. v.

<sup>2</sup> Worcester and McComb, *Body, Mind and Spirit*. Lichliter, *The Healing of Souls*.

single phase but to the entire task of the Christian ministry from the viewpoint of the modern Church.

The disease to be treated may be diagnosed in general terms as sin, greed, selfishness, ignorance, weakness, hatred, bigotry, superstition, intolerance, self-centeredness, unfilialness, unbrotherliness: in fact as anything and everything that hampers, hinders, handicaps, holds back, deflects or defeats a human being from coming to the maximum of his powers, from realizing in amplest measure the full spiritual possibilities of his being and destiny.

A young engineer writes me that as a child outgrows his A B C's, so any thinking person outgrows his belief in prayer as petition. "There is no use," he says, "in praying for the relief of suffering; I should go ahead and relieve my own suffering." While we read of the poor man that cried and the Lord heard him and delivered him out of all his troubles, this wise engineer cries and hears himself, and depends upon himself for deliverance out of all his troubles. At least that is his contention, though he would probably go as far beyond himself as to employ a physician. In that case why not as logically take account of spiritual values in healing? The wise engineer has a big half truth. Paul echoed it when he advised his followers to work out their own salvation with reverence and awe. But Paul completed this truth and so made it whole, when he bade them remember that it was God working within enabling them to do His will. This seems to be the crux of the cure of souls—finding, to quote Rufus Jones' happy phrase, "The Great Beyond within."

Magic and mysticism, superstition and faith alike represent our questing after the One without Whom, as Tolstoi has said, we cannot live. But Christianity, as distinguished from other religions, sees from the farther end of the trail, the seeking love of God in search of man. These two quests, the human and the divine, meet at the cross, for the cross is the Christian symbol of the answer to man's need and God's seeking. The cross is the cure of souls. It is the symbol of "that sacrificial

love seeking out the human soul to redeem it with kindness like a veritable Hound of Heaven.”<sup>\*</sup> But the cross is far from being the only symbol of the cure of souls. In St. Matthew’s Gospel we find in the Galilean shepherd a superb symbol of this essence of Christianity, the shepherd seeking his lost sheep. St. Luke also uses this figure and St. John represents Jesus as applying it to himself and declaring, “I am the Good Shepherd,”<sup>4</sup> and also applying it to Peter as he thrice recommissions Peter as a shepherd of souls: “Feed my lambs—feed my sheep—shepherd my sheep.”<sup>5</sup> If St. Mark does not call Jesus the Great Physician in so many words, he does fill his pages with the healing ministry of Jesus. St. Luke alone gives us the great human interest parables, the Father forgiving his prodigal son being the pearl of them all. Nowhere in the New Testament have we a more intriguing symbol of the seeking love of God responding to man’s need than in this story. St. John sees Jesus as the Divine Teacher, and pictures him most dramatically, standing against the background of the illuminated Temple, and crying, “I am the Light of the World.”<sup>6</sup> St. Matthew, earlier, had portrayed Jesus as conferring this title upon his disciples, saying to them, “Ye are the Light of the World” and bidding them let their light shine.<sup>7</sup> St. Matthew might easily have been thinking of that famous passage from his own Hebrew Bible, which was later placed upon the tombstone of a famous German teacher, Johann Gottlieb Fichte: “He that winneth souls is wise<sup>8</sup> and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever.”<sup>9</sup> These figures interplay in the Gospels, each writer having his point of emphasis. But each of the Gospel writers brings his story to a climax in the cross. Paul gathers up his conception of the Gospel story from this tragic moment and lifts up the cross as the completest symbol of the cure of souls: “But let me never boast except in

<sup>\*</sup> Walter Marshall Horton, *Theism and the Modern Mood*, published by Harper Brothers, 1930. Pg. 170.

<sup>4</sup> John 10:11.

<sup>5</sup> John 21:15-17.

<sup>6</sup> John 8:12.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 5:14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Proverbs 11:30.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel 12:13.

the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world is crucified to me and I to the world." <sup>10</sup>

And yet we must go back of the cross to the life of Jesus to find its motivation. Jesus saw men all about him as sheep without a shepherd, as lost souls, as dead men. He offered healing through revealing God, the heavenly Father who cares, who loves, who guides and who saves. But to Jesus salvation was more than a fiat, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." To him salvation was a consciousness of God revealing itself in a life more abundant, the evergrowing life of a loving and loyal child of God.

Our day needs as did the first century a new consciousness of God. The battle line of philosophy and theology now centers on the existence and nature of God. Yet religion's cardinal question is not, "What do you believe about God?" so much as, "What is your conviction of God?" The cure of souls will be found in awakening a consciousness of God in the souls of men, that becomes an absolute conviction of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This lies at the very heart of religion, which as Bernard Iddings Bell says in the *Atlantic Monthly*, <sup>11</sup> "is a way of living in contact with Reality personally conceived. If we do not give men a knowledge of the technique involved in religious experience, we deprive them of part of their birthright." The modern minister as a healer of souls is an Ambassador of Christ. He needs must follow in the Master's passion for God and humanity.

*As a healer of souls the minister must needs be a Prophet.* "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'" <sup>12</sup> The minister is a messenger of God. He is the preacher of good news, of the unsearchable riches of Christ. He must proclaim the seeking love of God. He must portray the fulness of life as a child of God. He must lift up those ideals without which the world

<sup>10</sup> Galatians 6:14. *Riverside New Testament*. Translation Houghton Mifflin Co.

<sup>11</sup> Pg. 320, September, 1932.

<sup>12</sup> Matthew 4:1.

would be left standardless and in confusion. At times he may lay the ax at the root of the tree, as a prophet of wrath, but primarily he is a prophet of good news. His, the healing balm of love, and forgiveness of sin and the fellowship of brotherly men. In his preaching Jesus seemed to gather into himself the teaching of the prophets of Israel. Amos taught that God was righteous and therefore demanded righteousness of his children. Hosea taught that God was forgiving and so demanded a forgiving love of his own. Isaiah saw God high and lifted up and demanded reverence and humility of those who worshipped him. Micah summed up the requirements of religion in his famous phrasing of doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. The second Isaiah put the cure of souls in never-dying words when he cried, "Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thought; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon." <sup>13</sup> All this becomes the heritage of the Christian preacher of today. And with such a heritage he must feel in his very soul the compulsion of the Master's commission, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." <sup>14</sup> He, like Jesus, must see the needs of men and women and little children. He must love them. He must reverence human personality. The two loves, love for God and love for his children are his inspiration for prophetic preaching. He must put his best into study, thought and preparation in proclaiming the message of God. "Inspired preaching," declares one of its inspired preachers, "is the greatest power known among men—that of kindled, consecrated personality—nowhere else can speech be so clothed with powers to awaken, rebuke, exalt and heal—nor since the dawn of our era has there been such a need as today for a virile, seer-like pulpit aglow with the love which covering a multitude of sins reveals them more radically and redeemingly than the most searching exposure." <sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah 55:7.

<sup>14</sup> John 20:21.

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Fort Newton in *The New Preaching*, Cokesbury Press. Pg. 43.



*As a healer of souls the minister must needs be a Priest.* We Protestants incline to the term "pastor." I use the term "priest" in such a sense. Ezekiel, the Father of Judaism, was what every minister should be, both a prophet and a priest. As a priest he gave a moral motivation to ritual and became a pastor of souls. Jesus went throughout all Galilee, not only preaching but also "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people."<sup>16</sup> This was a priestly or pastoral function. In curing a leper one day, he bade him go to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as evidence for them.<sup>17</sup> Jesus said to the paralytic borne of four, "Thy sins are forgiven thee,"<sup>18</sup> and to the bootlegger Zaccheus, at whose table he dined, "This day is salvation come to this house."<sup>19</sup> To Martha cumbered with worries over much serving he gave mental healing by directing her attention to the higher values.<sup>20</sup> All three were priestly functions. When Jesus called little children and took them up in his arms and put his hands on their heads in benediction he<sup>21</sup> was performing a priestly function. Jesus gave his followers an order to worship with the instruction, "This do in remembrance of me,"<sup>22</sup> and a ritual prayer without peer, with the direction, "When ye pray, say, 'Our Father; who art in heaven.'"<sup>23</sup> These also are priestly functions. He sent seventy of his disciples from house to house with the benediction, "Peace be to this house,"<sup>24</sup> and from that day to this pastoral calling has remained one of the most effective of all priestly functions. May he not also speak "peace" through healing clinics, with a working knowledge of applied psychology or with the aid of psychiatrist and physician?<sup>25</sup>

The minister today exercises his healing ministry as a priest in baptizing the children, gathering them for instruction and

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 4:23.

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 8:4.

<sup>18</sup> Mark 2:5.

<sup>19</sup> Luke 19:9.

<sup>20</sup> Luke 10:40-42.

<sup>21</sup> Matthew 19:13-15.

<sup>22</sup> I Corinthians 11:25.

<sup>23</sup> Luke 11:2.

<sup>24</sup> Luke 10:5.

<sup>25</sup> The minister should avail himself of some of the most recent books on this subject, such as *The Healing of Souls* by Lichliter, *Body, Mind and Spirit* by Worcester and McComb, *The Clinic of a Cleric* by Camerson.

confirming them in membership in the church, in marrying the young and burying the dead, in comforting the sorrowing and strengthening the faint-hearted, in celebrating the Holy Communion and conducting public worship. Indeed the message of the prophet, as Bishop Francis J. McConnell pointed out in his *Yale Lectures* (1930), would be lost but for the conservation of his ideals by the priest in permanent forms of worship and devotional technique for daily living.<sup>26</sup>

We are in a renaissance of public worship. Necessarily, as in any new emphasis, there are dangers to be avoided and goals to be kept in mind. There is a formalism in ritual that may become as dry as dust and as deadly as a soporific, but there may be an informalism in the contempt of ritual that is irreverent and no less deadly. Symbols of religion have their place and the use of ritual is not only a high art but may come close to a healing and saving grace. Dwight Bradley in his little book on *Creative Worship*<sup>27</sup> makes his thesis that leadership in public worship is both the supreme opportunity and the supreme challenge to the modern minister. Above prophetic preaching and pastoral service, above enrichment of ritual, intellectual candor and the social gospel, without discounting these great means of ministry, Dr. Bradley places leadership in the worship of God. Here is the very ground work of the Christian life. Particularly vital today is the priestly function of this leadership in worship for young people. Nor is Dr. Bradley alone in such a contention. Von Ogden Vogt advances the same claim in his *Modern Worship*, when he says: "It can still be claimed for the public worship of the Church that it offers the one incomparable privilege and opportunity for the all-comprehending expression of the life of man. The cause of social welfare becomes barren without some vision of what is to be the beautiful content of that welfare."<sup>28</sup> It is through the experience of beauty in public worship that Professor Wieman sees man

<sup>26</sup> *The Prophetic Ministry*. Pg. 123.

<sup>27</sup> Published by the Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life of the National Council of Congregational Churches.

<sup>28</sup> Yale University Press, 1927. Pg. 4.

attaining his most prophetic vision of God and coming in touch with those ideals of the Beyond which must become the patterns of man's larger life on earth. A layman, Mr. Walter B. Brockway of Portland, Maine, writing on "If I Were a Minister," says: "In my judgment the church service of worship is the outstanding function of the Christian Church, and if I were a minister I would labor and plan and pray that the service of worship should be just that—a service of worship—we have all overlooked the fact that more than half of all the people who go to a church service have no other contact with the church. Thus the service becomes to them the only means for spiritual sustenance, and if it is carefully done as a service of worship, the people are helped and they will come back, not because of the minister but because of the service."<sup>29</sup> I have just laid down a recent book on an approach to Ethics by an English scholar of distinction, the Reverend F. R. Barry, entitled *Christianity and the New World*, 1932.<sup>30</sup> In his closing chapter, "Worship and Christian Ethics," he observes that a religion is rightly judged by its worship, and then draws his conclusion that we should "re-enthroned worship at the living center of Christian experience, gathering all the values of life within the shrine of religious consecration, cleansing and enriching its good things as they are uplifted in religion—their fairest flower and their satisfaction."<sup>31</sup> Here is a new open door for the modern minister, for together with the conduct of and leadership in worship his may be the task of assisting in creating a liturgy that shall place in devotional forms the ideals and hopes of a new day.

*As a healer of souls the minister must be a Teacher.* Again to quote St. Matthew's record: "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues."<sup>32</sup> Prophet, Priest and Pedagogue—three correlated functions often at work at the same time in the same functionary. The modern minister might well study Jesus' technique as a teacher, his conversations, his So-

<sup>29</sup> *The Congregationalist*, February 26, 1931.

<sup>30</sup> Published by Harper and Bros.

<sup>31</sup> *Op. cit.* Pg. 305.

<sup>32</sup> Matthew 4:23.

cratic method of asking questions, his apt repartee in answering them, his injection of humor, as when he tells the Pharisee that he strains a gnat out of his soup and then swallows a camel whole, hump and all! He might reflect on Jesus' use of symbols: flowers, birds, growing vines, trees, fishing nets, pearls, sheep, candles, coins, dough—the most commonplace things of life—on which to hang great truths about God, man's duty to God, to his neighbor and to himself, his vitalization of life and his relation to the Kingdom of God. Then there is Jesus' artistry as a story teller giving his teaching a setting in matchless parables that have kept it alive and compelling for two thousand years. And with it all he must not overlook the personal equation, of Jesus' genius for friendliness. The cure of souls is in a large way a matter of human relations. Jesus makes friendly contacts everywhere: with the fishermen at their nets, with those social outlaws, Levi and Zaccheus, with a woman of uncertain character at the well in Samaria, with a ruler of the Jews like Nicodemus. Publicans and sinners and elect Pharisees—they all feel the warmth of his heart, and through that portal he reveals to them God; what he is like, how he loves, how he saves, and how the Kingdom of God may be set upon earth as it is in heaven.

Fortunately Jesus never put his panacea for the cure of souls into a formula. He treated individuals according to individual needs. To Nicodemus he said, "You must be born from above."<sup>22</sup> This leaves the clear implication that God must be found otherwise than by intellectual postulates in creeds and laws, important as these may be. To the woman of Samaria he brings a conviction about God that reacts on her own immoral life, and brings a cleansing that transforms her into an evangelist.<sup>24</sup> To Zaccheus he declared, "This day is salvation come to this house."<sup>25</sup> Here was clearly a recognition of social obligation and a response to it in the transformation of an outcast from the synagogue into a socially minded philanthropist. Here

<sup>22</sup> John 3:7. James Moffatt, *The Bible, a New Translation*.

<sup>24</sup> John 4:28-30.

<sup>25</sup> Luke 19:9.

were three different types of personality, finding three different ways of applying Jesus' insistence on denying one's self and taking up one's cross and following him. When Jesus demanded of the rich young ruler that he sell all that he had and give to the poor, he was still dealing with an individual, who needed to realize values before he could hope to find the Kingdom of God that is within.<sup>86</sup> In contrast to the rich young ruler who went away sorrowful, St. Luke tells of the rich young tax collector who accepted Jesus' challenge to follow him, by leaving all he had, after first giving his new chosen Master a great feast at his own house, to which were invited outcast tax collectors like himself—thieves, thugs and harlots, as the Pharisees might have called them. Indeed the Pharisees openly criticized Jesus for eating with them, drawing forth his memorable reply, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."<sup>87</sup> One can easily imagine that Jesus then looked out upon that motley crowd and spoke those words alone recorded on St. Matthew's pages, words which an English actor, Edmund Kean, declared to be so full of tears that no voice could pronounce them: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."<sup>88</sup> To publicans and sinners Jesus always spoke in words of yearning. For the religious leaders of his day, when he saw them as hypocrites or blind leaders of the blind, he reserved his harshest utterances. Upon little children he looked as upon children of the Father, as those to whom the Kingdom belonged, and he bade his hearers be converted and become like little children, if they would enter the Kingdom. We need a new grasp of Jesus' own manner of dealing with individuals in our emphasis on the personal experience of God. Always the cure of souls must deal with the individual, but with the individual as the unit of those social relationships which we define in terms of ethics, justice, internationalism or social salvation, and which Jesus always kept in the foreground of his thinking about the Kingdom of God. Evangelism expands into missions and community welfare; a community wel-

<sup>86</sup> Luke 18:18-24.<sup>87</sup> Luke 5:27-32.<sup>88</sup> Matthew 11:28.

fare that has no boundaries short of "peace on earth, goodwill among men." The Christian life finds fulfillment in expanding service and purpose carried out through human relations, surging ever toward a Community of Love. The minister as teacher, through the church school, with its newer ideals in religious education, has a continuous laboratory for the cure of souls and the building of the Community of Love on earth.

The Church that would reach such a goal in the cure of souls, that would witness those manifestations of God's love that transform the mind, transfigure the imagination, transfuse the soul, and transcend purely human effort, must needs see in Jesus the incarnation of love Divine. At the same time such a church must not be unmindful of its own times, of modern trends and ways of living. The average church in building and in program is poorly adapted to this enlarged scope of religious activity. If souls can be cured anywhere and under any conditions, more souls can be cured and better cured under better conditions. Too many churches are moribund; too many are dying for lack of new life; too many are lingering on in smug contentment. The young people in too many communities are to be found most anywhere except in the Protestant Church. Slackness in caring adequately for both the High School age and the college graduates has worked havoc. Denominational strife is partly responsible for our failures. Failure to provide youth with modern religious education is partly responsible. The Church must use what tools it has to be sure, but it should never be content with anything short of the best tools obtainable. A church centered on a program for the cure of souls needs an educational equipment that can compare with grade, high school and college for efficiency. If it would provide the best possible environment for the social life of its youth, then swimming pools, bowling alleys, pool tables, game rooms, gymnasiums, tennis courts, summer camps, may have a growing place. But social, recreational and educational life should be focused in a religious program and experience that has its spiritual center in a children's and youths' chapel for self-

expressional activity. This chapel need not be expensive, but it should have some of the symbols of religion which produce reverence, and it should be set apart and kept sacred for worship. Boys and girls and young people should be trained in choirs for public worship services, and also to care for the chancel, for junior ushering, and in other ways trained by the minister in church activities, as well as in church membership, as Samuel was trained by Eli in the temple. The observance of special days, Christmas, Epiphany, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, Children's, Mothers', Rally, All Saints, Labor, Armistice, Thanksgiving, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper for special groups, will all help to develop preachers, teachers, social workers, wide-visioned business men and good home makers. Psychological clinics for mind and nerve diseases, lenten lectures on timely subjects of church, community, evangelistic and educational interest and need, teacher training schools, mission study, world relation study:—these are mere hints as to adult interests in a wide-awake modern church that sees in the cure of souls a constant and continuous process of growing in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is of course possible to lose one's religion in things. On the other hand it is essential to use things as means to the great and eternal ends. The minister as Ambassador of Christ must, like Jeremiah and Jesus, incarnate his religion in his daily life. His preaching must keep close to life situations and problems and he must have the prophetic daring in promoting a new and Christian social order, and the teacher's patience in laying the foundations for such a Kingdom of Good Will. If he neglects his personal devotional living, and if he deal carelessly or negligently in the conduct of public worship for his people, he is in danger of losing the conviction out of which comes his vision. He is in danger of nullifying his leadership, for in devotional and mystical experiences are the mountain tops of vision, and "where there is no vision the people perish."<sup>39</sup> As

<sup>39</sup> Proverbs 29:18.

the artist sometimes sharpens his vision by looking at precious stones, the Christian minister needs to keep his vision clear by looking at the cross, for the cross is the enduring symbol of the means by which both the soul and society find their redemption.



## VI

### PRIEST AND PROPHET

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

VALERIU MARCU in his brilliant chapter on Clemenceau in *Men and Forces of Our Time* gives one the impression that the powerful Frenchman made action a substitute for thought. At least he made it a substitute for thought about ultimate matters. His thought seemed to lead to a vast nihilism in respect of the universe and life. "With this bitterness in his soul, faced by this blank nullity into which past and present and future resolve themselves, he is in danger of perishing. He shivers as if exposed stark naked to the wintry blast. Theology has after all justified its existence throughout fifteen centuries—as a fire that kept people warm, no matter the variety of scholasticism with which its flames were fanned. Clemenceau fights for his life, talks eloquently to convince himself, glosses over with his will those primal enigmata of existence which always plague him.—Slamming the door of speculation behind him, he rushed furiously into the open." <sup>1</sup>

The spectacle of Clemenceau dazzlingly active and so partly hiding from himself the emptiness of his mind is arresting and very revealing. Men live by their faith in great sanctions and when this faith is lost, however able they are, life is likely to become a strange even if brilliant St. Vitus' dance. So the man who keeps our sanctions alive is the really pivotal man in every age. He is the man who feeds those vital forces without which the whole machinery of life would run down. He is the

<sup>1</sup> Valeriu Marcu, *Men and Forces of Our Time*, Viking Press. Pg. 28, 29.

prophet. The power of his "Thus saith the Lord" lies just in his overwhelming confidence that he has direct contact with reality itself. As long as he possesses this faith and is able to share it with us life fairly throbs with creative energy. So it comes about that Doubt is our ultimate foe. We easily survive small doubts about particular things. We almost seem to thrive on this sort of doubt because it drives us beyond small scepticisms to large assurances. And as long as we can find triumphant faith beyond justified doubt we are safe. But if we reach a doubt with no faith beyond it, if we come to a doubt which is final and all consuming, the very fire of life dies out. We may make wild motions. But our power is gone. We are only the ghosts of the men we might have been, moving about amid the shadows of a make-believe world. Our recovery is through a fresh experience of the presence of the prophet. With pathetic eagerness we reach out for his help. As a man moving desperately through the freezing cold of wintry blasts sees at last the bright and welcome lights of home, so the sight of the prophet gives us a sense of possible escape from the deathly cold with which our scepticisms have surrounded us. This perpetual need of warmth on the part of shivering minds is one of the things which keep the Christian church alive. As long as it offers a blazing hearthfire to freezing minds the church will survive.

As a matter of fact the secret of no end of important matters lies here. All our practical plans, all our programs, require clear ideas and permanent passions. And sometimes we become so busy providing the clear ideas that we forget all about the necessity of feeding the noble passions if indeed they are to be made permanent. A program without a passion to support it is just about the most helpless thing in all the world. A good many eager young idealists in our time are on the way to rather terrific disillusionment just because they have assumed that the sources of noble passion will remain and will be constantly active without any special attention. It is rather disheartening to think of the cynical gloom which will overwhelm them when

they wake to the fact that they have become like high-powered automobiles equipped with every feature except the engine. They will be confronted by certain alternatives. It will be possible to go on making furtive and powerless motions. It will be possible in utter disillusionment to give up any hope of effective thought or life. Or it will be possible to take the humble and exacting way to the house of the prophet. You cannot with any permanent authenticity declare "Thus should men say" unless you have already cried with absolute assurance "Thus saith the Lord." You cannot with any real potency declare "Thus should men do" unless with indubitable validity you have already declared "Thus God hath done." A humanism which is the clue to the nature of God sets all the trumpets blowing. A humanism which denies or utterly fails to realize the existence of God depletes human life and social passion at the one place where depletion ultimately means death. When the prophet makes us conscious of the presence and power of the God of ethical love he is preparing as no one else can prepare not only for a new life for the individual but for the regeneration of society. Mysticism is the sense of God burning within. Social passion is that same fire shining out upon men. Social action is that same fire turned into deeds. The beloved community is impossible except as it gathers about the presence of the loving God.

When the prophetic passion inspires the building up of an institution you have the beginning of the church. And with the coming of the church you soon have the arrival of the priest. The prophet is a man of ideals. The priest is a man of institutions. The prophet expresses powerful sanctions in masterful words. The priest gives these sanctions corporate form in permanent organizations. There ought of course to be no quarrel between the prophet and the priest. They are engaged with different aspects of the same task. Indeed the prophet gains in practical power if he has in him a little of the priest. And the priest gains in every way if there is a prophet speaking in his heart. But as a matter of history we cannot deny that once you

begin to build up institutions their corporate form all too often gets in the way of the very ideals for which they exist. And it very often happens that the priest is loyal to the organization and in the vicissitudes of defending this loyalty quite loses contact with the moral and spiritual sanctions without which the institution has no real meaning. The priest comes to have a deep enthusiasm for those symbolic forms in which the deep ideal mysteries are shadowed forth. And his delight in these symbols sometimes strangely enough exists in a mind which has ceased to be moved by the realities for which the symbols stand. He builds noble cathedrals and neglects the terrific battles for righteousness in his own time. He evolves stately rituals and repeats their noble phrases while his life is being caught in the coils of careless and evil living. He builds up a vast ecclesiastical structure which reaches out over many lands and is unable to use its power when the days of moral crisis come or to mobilize its forces when the world desperately needs a word of moral leadership.

Because of all this there come inevitable reactions from the priestly expression of religion. Churches are made ugly for fear that beauty will contaminate. Services are made barren for fear that ritual will emasculate the spiritual life. Churches are made small independent units for fear that organization will turn into spiritual tyranny. All of this is not hard to understand as a matter of angry protest against the failures of the priest and the ecclesiastic. But when one begins to think critically it would appear that such actions represent councils of despair rather than the methods of sagacious leadership. For the dangers of priestcraft are not the only dangers of religion. If the corporate expression of the sanctions of religion may be fearfully inadequate and even tragically evil, on the other hand, a religion without corporate expression is in grave danger of becoming like a soul without a body. When the prophet loses connection with historic organizations he all too often becomes as ineffective as a passing cloud and at his worst he becomes as much of a nuisance as a common scold. It is all too easy for the prophet to

deal in words which never crystallize into deeds. It is not at all impossible for him to reach a state of mind where when he has said a thing he thinks he has done it. When an independent religious journal assumes the roll of the prophet there is a fine sense of freedom and candor. But the very irresponsibility which makes criticism so easy and so free has its own unlovely aspects. Curious lapses of taste, startling inaccuracies, and a habit of mind which sees the incidental fault and misses the essential virtue easily develop. The evangelist, who conducts a series of meetings, and then, with no necessity which demands that he live with the results of his own work, goes on to another town, finds it easy to cultivate a pseudo bravery of which he would be entirely incapable if he had to live with the people whose inadequacies he had been so unhesitatingly excoriating. It is not too hard to risk insulting a man you never expect to see again. The real courage, of course, is found when the priest is inspired by the prophet's mind. We scarcely solve our problems by giving up corporate life because that life may be so far from our ideal. Rather we do something toward solving our problems when we continue to be a part of the corporate life which attempts to embody the moral and spiritual ideals and offer our most earnest and responsible efforts to give the corporate form the quality of the spiritual ideal.

We render doubtful service to the ideals we love when we make churches ugly because we fear the debilitating effects of beauty. We are not quite the apostles of a nobler way of worship we imagine when we make services barren of noble ritual and lovely form, because we fear that these very symbols will destroy the moral and spiritual beauty to which we are devoted. For after all the rainbow must touch the ground. Only so shall we find the true pot of gold. The ideal must become the real. Otherwise it is a ghostly and ineffective shadow. We must face the danger and the difficulty of corporate life. But we must do it in the name of a gospel which will infuse the material with spiritual quality. We must not make this danger and difficulty an excuse for giving up the fight.

To be sure there is a division of function. And so there will always be a service which will be rendered by the prophet who acknowledges responsibility to no organization. There will always be a place for the periodical whose freedom grows out of its irresponsibility. There will always be a place for the evangelist who does not have to live with the results of his own work. But these aspects of leadership will be carried on in the most wholesome way if the men who are responsible for them realize that their splendid independence is not quite so noble a thing as at first sight appears. Their irresponsibility gives them wings. When they realize this they are men of finer balance, of surer judgment and of more flawless taste. And they do their own independent work with a firmer and surer touch.

On the other hand the priest must realize that every day subtle forces are working for his ethical undoing. To sink into the fatty degeneration of easy complacency is all too easy. To be an apostle of things as they are is so natural that sometimes it seems almost inevitable. How shall one speak a word which lifts a principle with a cutting edge, at the very moment when the man who will most feel the sharpness of the blade is needed for a large contribution to a new church, to some important benevolence or to the enterprise which carries the gospel about the world. These are the questions which search men's souls. And the men who rise to the high demand reach a level of personal character and moral leadership inaccessible to the irresponsible critics.

The future of the church then lies with the prophets who carry their prophetic fervor into the tasks of the priests. The new day is to be brought in by the priests who keep the prophetic fervor. The combination it may be said is difficult. Indeed it is difficult beyond the power of words to tell. It is so difficult that only a religion with a God of ethical love at the heart of it can hope to rise to the great occasion. "I believe in Christianity," said Tertullian, "because it is impossible."

## VII

### THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

R. E. DIFFENDORFER

THE *New Standard Dictionary* quotes *The Christian Advocate* as saying in 1890 that "The Spirit of missions is the spirit of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Four decades have seen no alteration in that definition.

Words and combinations of words unfortunately take on fine shades and differences of meaning through long use and through association, and sometimes have to be replaced by others to more closely and truly express the idea or ideal it is desired to present. It may be that the next few decades will see the elimination of the expression "foreign missions"—as we see it eliminated today in the titles of some agencies carrying on their selfsame program of Gospel proclamation.

But the idea contained in the term "foreign missions" will live as long as Christianity lives. For in the *idea* of foreign missions (or that enterprise under any other name) there is implied the very essence of Christianity, a sharing of Jesus Christ with others. The terminology merely fixes the geographic location of the witness as outside one's own country or across the seas. An Indian Christian proclaiming the Gospel in America or in Europe, as some are doing today, is as truly a foreign missionary as is an Anglo-Saxon proclaiming the Gospel in India.

Foreign missions, then, is synonymous with Christianity in meaning and in range of service. This definition does not

<sup>1</sup> From *The Christian Advocate*, October 2, 1890. Pg. 1. Quoted in *The New Standard Dictionary*, Funk and Wagnalls, sv. "Mission." Pg. 1588.

recognize as fully comprehending his professed faith, the person sometimes described as "a Christian—but he does not believe in missions." If "the spirit of missions is the spirit of Christ," the Christian must be as all-embracing as was He who sent his followers to teach and preach and to heal, not alone in the home-synagogue in Jerusalem but "into all the world."

The way in which one regards foreign missions is determined largely by one's views upon the whole Christian philosophy and program—one can have no larger vision for Christian philosophy in Africa than he is seeking to apply through his religion at home. It is true also that changes in policies, programs and points of view of missionary work overseas are largely reflections of changing policies, programs and points of view in the Christian expression in America and in Europe. The service activities and expanding institutions on the foreign field are reflections of similar stages of thought and development in America and European Protestantism.

Those Christians who find for their belief greatest authority in the imperative sentences of the Scriptures, take their missionary earnestness from the command of Christ, "Go ye into all the world." <sup>2</sup>

Those who see in Jesus Christ the power to change and reshape individual human lives, to lift them from sin to sonship, see in the foreign missionary enterprise the means of bringing many new souls into the joys of fellowship with the Master of men.

Those who find that the spirit of Christ is the only power that can make harmony between the races and nations, that can lift those economically impoverished, that can bring justice to women and children, that can save a people from economic or mortal or spiritual or intellectual ruin: these would extend the benefits of their religion to peoples with whom we come into contact "in this shrinking world."

And those who believe in Christianity largely for its expressions in church, in school, in hospital, in orphanage, and in

<sup>2</sup> Mark 16:15.



home for the aged, believe also in foreign missions for the benefits accruing from similar institutions across the oceans.

As the "home church" changes from decade to decade its emphasis upon one or the other of these means of attaining the Christ-ideal, it is but natural to find similar changes in policies and programs on the foreign mission field. *But the ultimate goal of Christianity—the making of Christlike men for the building of the Kingdom of God upon earth—is fixed and unchanging. And that is the only goal of the foreign missionary enterprise.*

New words, new phrases, new paths, new tools, new songs may displace those to which our childhood was accustomed: it is today's generation studying afresh the approaches to the goal of all life. Wooden boat, ice crusher, dog-sled, dirigible, aeroplane: all have penetrated the Arctic. They were succeeding generations using the tools to hand in the selfsame task of reaching the goal—the North Pole.

No finer statement of the missionary motive has been penned than that formulated by the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1928. As one reads its lines, there comes the conviction that here is the very essence of Christianity—at home and abroad:

"The Gospel is the answer to the world's greatest need. It is not our discovery or achievement; it rests on what we recognize as an act of God. It is first and foremost 'Good News.' It announces glorious Truth. Its very nature forbids us to say that it may be the right belief for some but not for others. Either it is true for all, or it is not true at all.

"But questions concerning the missionary motive have been widely raised, and such a change in the habits of men's thoughts as the last generation has witnessed must call for a re-examination of these questions.

"Accordingly we would lay bare the motives that impel us to the missionary enterprise. We recognize that the health of our movement and of our souls demands a self-criticism that is relentless and exacting.

"In searching for the motives that impel us we find ourselves eliminating decisively and at once certain motives that may seem,

in the minds of some, to have become mixed up with purer motives in the history of the movement. We repudiate any attempt on the part of trade or of governments, openly or covertly, to use the missionary cause for ulterior purposes. Our Gospel by its very nature and by its declaration of the sacredness of human personality stands against all exploitation of man by man, so that we cannot tolerate any desire, conscious or unconscious, to use this movement for purposes of fastening a bondage, economic, political, or social, on any people.

"Going deeper, on our part we would repudiate any symptoms of a religious imperialism that would desire to impose beliefs and practices on others in order to manage their souls in their supposed interests. We obey a God who respects our wills and we desire to respect those of others. . . ."

"Our true and compelling motive lies in the very nature of the God to whom we have given our hearts. Since He is love, His very nature is to share. Christ is the expression in time of the eternal self-giving of the Father. Coming into fellowship with Christ we find in ourselves an over-mastering impulse to share Him with others. We are constrained by the love of Christ and by obedience to His last command. He Himself said, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly,'<sup>\*</sup> and our experience corroborates it. He has become life to us. We would share that life.

"We are assured that Christ comes with an offer of life to man and to societies and to nations. We believe that in Him the shackles of moral evil and guilt are broken from human personality and that men are made free, and that such personal freedom lies at the basis of the freeing of society from cramping custom and blighting social practices and political bondage, so that in Christ men and societies and nations may stand up free and complete.

"We find in Christ, and especially in His cross and resurrection, an inexhaustible source of power that makes up hope when there is no hope. We believe that through it men and societies and nations that have lost their moral nerve to live will be quickened into life.

"We have a pattern in our minds as to what form that life should take. We believe in a Christlike world. We know nothing better; we can be content with nothing less. We do not go to the nations called non-Christian because they are the worst of the world and they alone are in need—we go because they are a part of the world and share with us in the same human need—the need of

<sup>\*</sup> John 10:10.

redemption from ourselves and from sin, the need to have life complete and abundant and to be remade after this pattern of Christ-likeness. We desire a world in which Christ will not be crucified but where His Spirit shall reign.

"We believe that men are made for Christ and cannot really live apart from Him. Our fathers were impressed with the horror that men should die without Christ—we share that horror; we are impressed also with the horror that men should live without Christ.

"Herein lies the Christian motive; it is simple. We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without Him. We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christ-like. We cannot be idle while the yearning of His heart for his brethren is unsatisfied.

"Since Christ is the motive, the end of Christian missions fits in with that motive. Its end is nothing less than the production of Christlike character in individuals and societies and nations through faith in and fellowship with Christ the living Savior, and through corporate sharing of life in a divine society.

"Christ is our motive and Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more." <sup>4</sup>

### *The Enterprise in Statistics*

The missionary enterprise of Protestantism is one of the largest businesses carried on in the modern world. No secular concern, no matter how vast its resources, goes so far into the distant places of the world as does the Christian church in its seeking to spread the Gospel message. Certainly there is no other agency dispensing goodwill and hope and international friendship on anything like the scale of Protestant service. Not alone are societies in the United States and Canada and in the British Isles engaged in this effort to reach "the last man in earth's remotest corner," but similar "sending agencies" are organized in nine countries of continental Europe, in three Latin-American lands, in the West Indies, in Africa, in Australia, and in New Zealand.

The following tables—based upon the latest available statistics—give some idea of the extent of Christian service given by missionaries. It should be noted that they picture the situa-

<sup>4</sup> *Report, Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928, Vol. I. Pg. 404-407.*

tion before the present world financial depression; this situation has made a lessening in the number of missionaries and consequently a lessening in some of the services rendered.

## THE CHURCH

	Mission- aries	National Pastors	Organ- ized Churches	Christian Community	Sunday Schools	Sunday School Pupils
Japan and Korea . . . . .	1,851	7,577	3,362	442,077	7,476	435,848
China . . . . .	7,663	27,133	5,424	795,075	5,122	292,857
India . . . . .	5,682	48,784	7,837	2,242,798	18,444	686,290
Asia (other than above)	1,328	3,141	670	141,311	1,515	77,501
Africa . . . . .	6,289	43,181	10,592	2,629,437	8,982	540,896
Australasia, Nether- lands, Indies, Philip- pines and other Pa- cific isles . . . . .	1,810	12,599	4,095	1,224,296	3,637	156,090
Latin America and West Indies . . . . .	3,249	6,094	3,590	789,978	4,728	321,742

At best these figures are pitifully inadequate to make vivid the Christian service rendered by missionaries and by national workers. To see, to know, to feel the effects of service given in the name of Jesus Christ, one would have to visualize a vast panorama of lives changed and shaped more like the Christian idea: for, after all, changed human beings, and, through them, changed human society—a world approaching the Kingdom of God upon earth—constitute the whole Christian and missionary objective. To see this service one would have to witness an almost endless line of men and women redeemed from sin, saved from the evil spirits of fear and superstition; men and women made whole in body as well as in soul—snatched from the grip of leprosy, or the plague, or sleeping sickness, or small-pox; little children lifted from the poverty and degradation that is the lot of Asia's parentless, given a chance in orphanage and

# EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

	Kinder- garten Pupils	Elementary Pupils	Middle School Pupils	Industrial Pupils	Teacher Training Students	College Students	Theological and Bible Training Students
Japan and Korea.....	12,728	55,112	29,702	1,393	505	4,072	1,285
China.....	5,612	251,841	25,597	1,065	1,364	2,811	3,940
India.....	2,465	537,239	89,442	2,707	2,444	11,605	2,534
Asia (other than above).....	1,293	87,955	16,907	487	93	1,988	325
Africa.....	1,686	899,482	15,021	2,248	5,374	994	1,536
Australasia, Netherlands, Indies, Phil- ippines and other Pacific isles....	360	159,158	4,212	1,679	1,045	21	1,134
Latin America and West Indies .....	2,658	166,323	6,360	619	618	428	585

MEDICAL SERVICE

	Missionary Physicians	Missionary Nurses	National Physicians	National Nurses and Helpers	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Orphanages	Leper Asylums
Japan and Korea.....	40	24	36	348	30	36	14	8
China.....	499	320	373	2,340	301	496	44	17
India.....	297	220	145	1,360	252	511	154	62
Asia (other than above).....	481	67	28	223	57	84	8	3
Africa.....	139	235	8	495	116	366	81	6
Australasia, Netherlands, Indies, Philippines and other Pacific isles.	53	65	9	465	65	108	20	7
Latin America and West Indies.....	30	42	8	192	18	64	25	1

school, and taking their place as Christian men and women. So vast and varied is the missionary service that no one can visualize its totality—one can only get an impression of the whole through a fleeting glimpse of one child, or man, or home revolutionized through the Gospel ministry.

### *The Jerusalem Conference*

The world in which we live today—the world in which the missionaries and the whole Christian Church serve is a far different world from that in which Judson and Livingstone and Taylor and other pioneers lived. It is indeed a far different world from that in which we ourselves lived before 1914. I need not here cite as proof of this change the long list of details concerning the rise of nationalism in Asia, the continued unrest in Europe and America, the spread of Communism, the movements to revive the waning religions of the Far East, and the world-wide economic revolution.

Confronted with this greatly changed world, vast readjustments have been called for and undertaken in the field of foreign missions. In the opinion of unbiased observers, in fact, the missionary program has been more widely and more significantly adjusted to the peculiarly pressing demands of today than any other international enterprise, political, economic, or social.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new;  
And God fulfills himself in many ways"—<sup>5</sup>

"Programs," which are made by men, may be changed by men to meet changing conditions; but the great eternal purposes of the missionary enterprise, given us by the Master himself, know no such variations.

It was of the greatest strategic importance that the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council should have come in 1928 on the very eve of the more serious phase of post-war developments. At Jerusalem, sensing the new atmos-

<sup>5</sup> Tennyson, *The Passing of Arthur*.

phere that pervaded the world, the missionaries, nationals and missionary executives of many lands undertook a complete re-statement of the centuries-old missionary motive, considered a revision of missionary plans, and laid the foundations on which, in this new world, the missionary enterprise might build with added confidence and security. The motive, reaffirmed at Jerusalem, was precisely that which led the first missionaries to forsake the comforts and opportunities of life at home for the uncertainties of life in strange new lands for the Gospel's sake. Today's motives were altered not one whit in their statement—they were only extended in their application. The Christian's purpose to bring the world to the feet of our Lord and Master is no longer Western, it is Eastern and Western, Northern and Southern. Christ's plan, now, is without geographical limitations. It is shared by all races of men and in this fact—that missions have made the missionary purpose indigenous—is one of the most significant achievements of our work and one of the surest guarantees of its future.

The Jerusalem Meeting, however, did not end with Jerusalem. On the contrary, its spirit and purposes were carried to every continent and made the basis for a reappraisal of the Christian world program and a recommitment to its final success. Since Jerusalem, impetus has been given in many lands to movements for a closer interchurch unity, nationals have moved rapidly forward in the directing places in Christian work. In many denominations, the last four years have witnessed changes more fundamental, perhaps, than any that ever occurred to their mission work in any similar period.

The Jerusalem Meeting has laid foundations upon which our whole missionary enterprise and our whole Christian enterprise will be building for several decades. It marked 1928 as an important milestone in the progress of Christ's onward march in the hearts and affairs of men.

To select but one of many important developments at Jerusalem, one might mention the new emphasis on the world's "forgotten man"—the rural worker who has been too long



neglected upon every mission field by the agents of Christianity. In every land, even in America, these rural workers, numbering about one-half the world's population, have been left without church, without school, without the service of hospital and dispensary. The missionaries at Jerusalem discovered for themselves, the rural worker, focused attention upon his needs, have made the "sending agencies" conscious of their neglect, and have in the past four years succeeded in directing workers and funds toward relieving some of the conditions surrounding his most necessary service to the world. We quote from the findings of the meeting:

"The rural work in mission fields is an organic part of the service demanded of the Church everywhere—East and West—to lead in the effort to build a rural civilization that shall be Christian to the core. This effort looks toward the development of an intelligent, literate, and efficient rural population, well organized and well led, who shall share the economic, the political, and the social emancipation, as well as the continued advancement of the masses of men, who shall participate fully in world affairs, and who shall be moved and inspired by the Christian spirit.

"Specific attention to rural needs by missions and churches is necessary, in part because of the numbers of people involved—nearly a thousand million of them—and the great issues of Christian civilization at stake; but also because the rural people live apart from the centers of wealth and population, their occupations differ in many respects from those of industrial and urban places, and many aspects of their institutional and group life have no counterpart in the city. Moreover, this great branch of mission service, in all its implications for Kingdom-building, is not now sufficiently covered, either as to policies and programs or as to specially trained leadership and adequate financial support. . . .

"The following are the main objectives in the effort to create and maintain the Christian character in rural communities. While they have been differentiated for purposes of presentation, it is obvious that they are vitally interrelated. From the Christian viewpoint religion should permeate and dominate all the life of the community:

"1. The development of Christian character, Christian fellowship, and Christian service.

"2. The healthful living in a healthy environment.

"3. The effective cultivation of the physical resources necessary to the food supply and the sound economic development of people in villages and in the open country.

"4. The improvement of family life through a knowledge of such home activities as the care of children, food, sleeping facilities, sanitation, and all that centers about the life of women and children.

"5. A social attitude toward neighbors which makes possible sincere cooperation despite obstacles of religion, nationality, race, color, or language.

"6. The constant re-creation of personality—physical, mental, and spiritual—which may be gained not only from a sound use of leisure time, but from an appreciation of the beautiful, the good, and the inspiring in nature and in humanity." \*

### *The Trend of Mission Thought*

Dr. Charles R. Watson, experienced missionary statesman, in an able paper presented at Pendle Hill Conference, July 13, 1931, pointed out that the approach and program of missions are being "rethought" continually. But, he says, much of the missionary program of the last two decades grew out of the "rethinking" at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, and the changes since the World War make further rethinking necessary. The direction of the changes, including methods and programs, Dr. Watson mentions under seven major considerations, which may be summarized thus briefly:

1. Economic, tourist, newspaper, motion picture, commercial and political contacts of non-Christian lands with Christian lands makes for the missionary a different and more difficult task than was his a few decades ago when he was the chief point of international and interracial contact.

2. The scope of Christian missions is not definitely determined by the "sending" churches: some look favorably only upon the evangelistic method, and think of hospitals and schools merely as "bait" for those who preach. Others see a wide range for Christlike service along education, medical, agricultural and industrial lines.

3. There is a growing feeling that it is erroneous to maintain

\* *Op. cit.*, Vol. VI. Pg. 245-248.

an attitude of hostility to non-Christian faiths, and a desire to recognize and build upon whatever may be of value in Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism and other faiths of Asia.

4. There is a growing desire to give more and more scope for the developing national Christian leadership in the various fields, and to place nationals in places of responsibility in church, school, hospital and other institutions, as soon as they show the necessary qualifications—the missionaries are becoming advisors and helpers rather than leaders.

5. Efforts are being made in many places to let the nationals comprehend and express Christ and His Way of Life in terms suited to their own racial temperaments. "Are we presenting Christ as one whose significance to life has already been thoroughly worked out in our own western creeds and theologies, in our western social and economic orders; or do we present Him as a living Lord whose wondrous personality may require new statements of allegiance and whose moral dynamic may break forth in new directions not envisaged at the present time?"<sup>7</sup>

6. There is a growing need for more unity on the mission field, through the wiping out of many denominational lines no longer necessary, and through more centralized direction of missionary activities upon the field.

7. The "home church" must be rechallenged to support the missionary enterprise. And that challenge must appeal to the service motive; it must appeal to creative living; it must be a call to world brotherhood; it must call for fellowship with a Living Lord.

### *"Re-Thinking Missions"*

In November, 1932, there appeared the Report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry—since published in book form under the title, *Re-thinking Missions*<sup>8</sup>—the result of a two and a half years' study, by independent laymen of seven denomina-

<sup>7</sup> Charles R. Watson, Address at Pendle Hill Conference, July 13, 1931. Quoted in *International Review of Missions*, January, 1932. Pg. 115.

<sup>8</sup> *Re-thinking Missions*, edited by William E. Hocking, Harper and Brothers, 1933.

tions, of mission work in India, Burma, China and Japan. The Report has been accorded considerable publicity in the newspapers and religious magazines, and in the latter media has been the subject of considerable editorializing and special articles, pro and con.

Generally speaking, the several mission boards and societies have welcomed the Report, while not agreeing with all conclusions, and are studying it for the purpose of discovering where their work can be bettered. The Report advocates a high grade of missionary personnel and of missionary institutions; a greater emphasis upon the service motive in missions without any weakening of the Gospel message; a building of national Christian churches in all major fields and a minimizing or total elimination of denominational emphasis. The laymen would approach each service field as an interdenominational Protestant unit. These are ideals toward which the mission boards are steadily—and not so slowly as some may imagine—working.

One of the first fruits of this Report has been a meeting of executives and members of several of the boards considered by the laymen, for the purpose of "considering further cooperation and formulating definite recommendations." There is no doubt that in the years ahead all these studies and recommendations will greatly influence the trend of missionary activities.

All of the boards are in practical agreement that "because of the human element and the changing circumstances, an enterprise of the proportions and traditions of foreign missions needs and should always welcome critical analysis and searching examination, especially when they are inspired by the desire to see the work of Christ advanced." \* The Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry was instituted and conducted in that spirit; its results will be far-reaching.

### *Christianity and Non-Christian Faiths*

"We welcome every noble quality in non-Christian persons or systems as further proof that the Father who sent His

\* Journal, Annual Meeting, Board of Foreign Missions, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1932. Pg. 27.

son into the world, has nowhere left himself without witness."<sup>10</sup>

This word from the message of the Jerusalem Meeting epitomizes the new mental approach with which the Christian missionary goes to a non-Christian people. He no longer goes to "heathen." He no longer seeks violently to wrench men and women from every bit of faith that has been theirs through decades and centuries. In Jesus Christ, the missionary still believes and teaches, the light that lighteneth every man shone forth in its full splendor, and that He still comes to men's hearts "to fulfill." With such a willingness to see good and beauty and truth wherever God has deemed wise to reveal them, some of the missionary hymns of half a century ago can no longer be sung by missionary or national.

While the Christian must realize the paucity of spiritual values which many other religions have for their followers and while he must deplore the lack of "service for others" which results from the practice of those faiths, yet he must, to be intellectually and spiritually honest, admire and conserve and even attempt himself to attain to some of the conspicuous points in which certain non-Christians surpass most Christians. For example, he must "recognize as part of the one Truth that sense of the Majesty of God and the consequent reverence in worship, which are conspicuous in Islam; the deep sympathy for the world's sorrow and unselfish search for the way of escape, which are at the heart of Buddhism; the desire for contact with Ultimate Reality conceived as spiritual, which is prominent in Hinduism; the belief in a moral order of the universe and consequent insistence on moral conduct, which are inculcated by Confucianism; the disinterested pursuit of truth and of human welfare which are often found in those who stand for secular civilization but do not accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour."

Speaking to the non-Christian world, the Jerusalem Meeting said in part what should be in the minds and hearts of all Christians—especially those engaged in any way in the missionary enterprise of the church:

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.* Pg. 410.

"Christianity is not a Western religion, nor is it yet effectively accepted by the Western world as a whole. Christ belongs to the peoples of Africa and Asia as much as to the European or American. We call all men to equal fellowship in Him. But to come to Him is always self-surrender. We must not come in the pride of national heritage or religious tradition; he who would enter the Kingdom of God must become as a little child, though in that Kingdom are all the treasures of man's aspirations, consecrated and harmonized. Just because Christ is the self-disclosure of the One God, all human aspirations are towards Him, and yet of no human tradition is He merely the continuation. He is the desire of all nations; but He is always more, and other, than they had desired before they learnt of Him.

"But we would insist that when the Gospel of the Love of God comes home with power to the human heart, it speaks to each man, not as Moslem or as Buddhist, or an adherent of any system, but just as man. And while we rightly study other religions in order to approach men wisely, yet at the last we speak as men to men, inviting them to share with us the pardon and the life that we have found in Christ."<sup>11</sup>

### *Missions and Secularization*

Perhaps the whole Christian ideal—as expressed in America as well as in Asia—is as much in conflict with a way of life to which has been given the name "secularism" as it is with non-Christian faiths. And secularism invades every land and every religion. The issue today is and the issue perhaps for years to come will be the issue between the secular way of life and the Christ way of life.

Secularization is the preoccupation of men with material things to the exclusion of moral and religious values. The Christ way of life recognizes the value of things but subordinates them to moral and spiritual values.

Secularization is not new in the world. It has existed in every century. But today, due to the labor of science and art, due to discoverers and inventors in many realms, due to the spread of the so-called scientific method to all areas of life, it takes on a new and menacing meaning. It tends to withdraw

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I. Pg. 411, 412.

whole fields of human activity outside the control of religion and morality—the use, for example, of chemical discoveries in making warfare more gruesome and death-certain than ever before in history.

A commission studying "The Secularization of Life" at the Delaware (Ohio) Study Conference, in 1931, brought forth evidence that the secularistic trend of thought and action has invaded such diverse institutions and fields as the family, education, business, industry, recreation, moral authority, and the church. The secular philosophy takes these institutions outside the realm of morality and religion; the church of Jesus Christ still claims them for Him. Here is the real clash between Christianity and the "new paganism." In this battle the Christian churches in America and in Europe must stand united with the Christian churches of Asia and Africa.

Hand in hand with this secular and materialistic philosophy goes, far too often, a belief in militarism. Scores of young men and women have come out of the East to study in our schools and have returned to their native lands convinced that only by following this secular philosophy of life can their nations hope to become strong. These nations, as the advocates of this conviction argue, can win their places in the sun by first developing their own material possessions, and, second, by preparing themselves to defend those possessions, against all comers. This point of view has been, of late, particularly widespread in China. It is evident also in India, where Mahatma Gandhi has had increasing difficulty to hold in check the extremists among the nationalists who do not believe that a program of non-violence is suited to the realities of this world.

If Christianity fails to carry on, we can count on it that secularism, materialism and militarism will carry on more rapidly. Foreign missions and foreign missionaries today are called to stand sponsor before the world for a gospel of brotherliness in contrast to that of exclusiveness and hate. This, with the history of our world so apparent, is not easy. But we can hardly be indifferent to what will be involved for the world of

our children if the missionaries, through their inadequacy or, more possibly, through our own shortsightedness, should fail.

### *Giving for Foreign Missions*

It was estimated that in 1923 a sum approximating \$70,000,000 was spent in twelve months by Protestant Christians—mostly in America and Europe—for the activities of missionary bodies serving non-Christian lands. This amount included the moneys used in the United States for work among the American Indians and the immigrants from countries in Asia. In addition to this other millions of dollars were secured through school and hospital fees, and the sale of literature. It is likely that the yearly amount expended for foreign missions work is somewhat less than that figure today, though later general statistics are not available.

In an exhaustive study of *Trends in Protestant Giving*, prepared by Charles H. Fahs for the Institute of Social and Religious Research in 1929, some interesting conclusions are reached. Briefly summarized, these are:

The total giving for current congregational expenses (based upon a study of eleven leading denominations) grew steadily from 1912 to 1927. This was made necessary, in part, because of the decreasing purchasing power of the dollar.

For these same denominations, actual and per capita gifts for total benevolent causes rose steadily from 1913 to 1920; after that they dropped rapidly.

Their total giving in 1913 and 1914 was 21 per cent for benevolences and 79 per cent for congregational costs. By 1920 the figures had changed to 35 per cent for benevolences, 65 per cent for local costs. From 1920 on the ratio shifted backward and in 1927 it had reached the figures of 20 per cent for benevolences and 78 per cent for local costs.

Statistics indicate a vast increase in the value of church and parsonage property in the United States—representing mostly “new money” rather than indebtedness or reappraisal.

Statistics indicate also an extraordinary increase in the value



of property, equipment, and endowments of American church educational and philanthropic institutions—institutions not depending usually on church general benevolent funds.

The indications are that the ratio between the per capita giving for all church benevolences varied from 1918 through the post-war period to 1927. Foreign missions averaged about 29 per cent of total benevolent giving.

The figures available for the eleven denominations (including the largest three) do not give evidence that during the post-war period the foreign missionary cause has lost ground in relation to the group of national causes provided for through the total benevolences.

The most notable trend in the giving of Protestant churches since the war, Mr. Fahs reminds us, was the unified budget and the unified plans of promotion. Many of the great boards practically surrendered their close contacts built up through a century of history—in order to become part of the united appeal.

"There is nothing new in this story," says Mr. Fahs. "What has been coming to pass in these later years seems to have been the outcome of forces already at work in the years of waxing benevolent incomes. Specific human needs, the realization of which had been at the roots of benevolent giving through the churches, tended to disappear behind the curtain of unified budgets. With unified promotion campaigns to raise unified budgets, church servants of a somewhat new kind were called into action. Responsibility for raising funds was largely shifted from the administrative groups of the various boards to central promotional staffs, whose members were unavoidably further removed in feeling from the areas of poignant need than were the administrative officers of the boards. Conversely, the board officers and the missionaries and others in the field became, by comparison with earlier conditions, somewhat insulated from the church congregations. Fewer collections for benevolences were taken in the churches, and the presentation of benevolent needs to the congregations was less concrete and detailed. The faithful few or the many, who had come through the years to visualize specific situations and needs, now had their eyes turned to a 'budget' to be raised."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.* Pg. 64.

The indications are that the so-called "slump" in foreign missions giving—a slump that antedated the present general financial depression and that affected practically all mission agencies, home and foreign, partaking of a united budget—was due largely to this dehumanizing and devisualizing of the appeal. It may be expected that the next five years will see efforts made to develop methods of picturing to the church these specific human needs, at the same time conserving whatever of value there may be found in the unified budget and unified appeal. Church leaders everywhere agree that the heart of the church is sound in regard to missions, but it wants an opportunity to express itself in definite giving to definite needs.

*"Is the Day of Missions Done?"*

Every once in a while some bright columnist or sketchy thinker tells us that "the day of foreign missions is done"—that people in Asia and in Africa have progressed beyond the day when they need or will accept the ministry of Christians and Christian institutions. Perhaps the term "foreign missions" may in the coming decades be relegated to the obscurity which has befallen other familiar phrases. But the central idea of the Christian faith, the central idea of the missionary enterprise will persist under some name so long as there is human need.

Is there sin anywhere? Is there any person laboring under unjust or unhealthy or unfair conditions? Is there poverty, or ignorance, or pain, or suffering, or disease? Are there mothers or little children, or blind, or orphans, or lepers who need comfort and kindness and physical necessities? Is there crime anywhere? So long as any such question must be answered in the affirmative, so long as the Kingdom of God has not taken supreme control of man and of his earthly affairs, the missionary enterprise will persist. What matter the name, the details of program, the modes and fields of operation, if the cause—the cause of Kingdom building—is advancing?

Sometimes we talk so much of the "problems" of the foreign mission enterprise that we get discouraged and fail to see the

central point of our activity: that the Christian message and Christian institutions are molding men upon every continent—men who are changing the whole face of the world. Indeed, there is no hope for any people or race or nation except through men touched by the spirit of Christ, men knowing the will and purpose of God. Such men the Christian church is raising wherever the Gospel is proclaimed. And the future of the world is safe since the testimony on every side is that today men are listening more eagerly for the voice of Jesus Christ than ever before in the world's history.

True, there are problems and discouragements on the "home base" of the foreign missionary enterprise: we hear much of "the depression," "cuts," "curtailments," "recalls," and "isolation." From Asia and Africa and Latin America come discouragements also: banditry, flood, famine, nationalism, warfare, anti-Christian propaganda, poverty, economic depression, communism, revolution and civil strife. Our newspapers headline these disturbances. They affect missionary activity and missionary policy. We give time and thought to their adjustment, and it is easy to imagine they are the major concern of the missionary enterprise.

But, unheralded and unsung amid all these spectacular situations, hundreds of missionaries and thousands of national Christian leaders are quietly and effectively serving in their appointed places. They are proclaiming the Gospel message through word and deed in church, in school, in hospital, and along the dusty road on every continent. And that Gospel is molding new leaders, new prophets, new priests—Christian men and women in whose hands the nations of the future will be safe, will be lifted a little nearer the Christ-ideal.

### *Looking Down the Years*

One would be rash indeed to attempt to look far down the coming decades and try to envisage the future of the Christian enterprise as it spreads among men and nations. And yet there are some trends that may indicate the path.

As general education and as Christianity spreads in parts of the Orient and of Africa, as new national leaders are developed in church and in school, the tasks of the missionaries from the West will undoubtedly change. Teachers, pastors, doctors and administrators of organizations will be chosen more and more from the qualified and seasoned specialists in their several fields. Still there will be room for pioneers—pioneers not in the geographical sense, but pioneers in new areas of service.

More important, perhaps, will be the interchange of cultures—the effect of Christian Asiatics and Christian Africans upon the West as well as upon their own lands. It is well within the range of the feasible—and that at an early date—for some Christian Tagore to proclaim the Gospel message, interpreted through India's fine spiritual outlook, from some pulpit in New York. What a quieting to the "nerves" of a great metropolis the Gospel would become from such lips! Or some Kagawa, with a social vision perhaps unequalled anywhere else in the world, could render America a great service by a period of years teaching and preaching and proclaiming human values in Pittsburgh or in Chicago.

The Kingdom of God—an ideal born in the East, now feebly nurtured in the West amid far too uncongenial surroundings—may yet be reaffirmed in the Orient, reinterpreted in closer keeping with the Master's blueprint, and proclaimed for the true salvation of men and society, East and West.

In many respects the "day of foreign missions," call it by any name you will so long as Christ's ideal is central, is but dawning.

B

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL



VIII

PERSONAL RELIGION

RAYMOND CALKINS

THE age in which we live, so far as its religious life is concerned, is distinguished by two apparently divergent tendencies. On the one hand, there is the trend to make religion more and more an interior affair: to find the proof of its reality, its meaning, and its joy in an inward religious experience. On the other hand, there is the conviction that if religion be a reality, it must penetrate the whole area of men's practical interests, and shape and influence all of what are called the secular concerns of life. On the one hand, the authentication of religion is found in the actual spiritual experience of the individual. But on the other hand it is recognized that "more men in our modern world are irreligious because religion has failed to make civilization ethical than because it has failed to maintain intellectual respectability."<sup>1</sup> And a set religious purpose may be found everywhere today where religion is taken as a serious interest that it shall make civilization ethical.

It is with the first of these tendencies in the modern religious movement that this essay deals. It may well be defined as the Return of the Soul. The spirit of man, that is, has fallen back on what it has discovered to be its safe and sure position from which it cannot be dislodged. Instead of seeking to find the source of authority, the secret of certainty, in externalities of any kind, men are discovering the joy, the power, and the assurance of religious reality, not in the outside world, but in

<sup>1</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *Mechanical Men in a Mechanical Age*, "The World Tomorrow," December, 1930.

the realm of inward experience. Religion for multitudes of people is becoming more and more personal.

There are many and varied causes for this Retreat of the Spirit upon itself, this discovery of religion in the depths of one's own experience. One of them is the enormous development of the material side of existence, the absorption of our modern world in the production and distribution of wealth, the preoccupation of the human mind in the discovery and application of scientific truth. Life, in a word, has become a huge workshop, and the rattle of its machinery has appalled the soul. As Reginald J. Campbell is reported to have said, "Its hectic speed, its hideous noise, its obsessive externality, its lack of rich inwardness, its clutter of things, and its confusion of voices, have utterly wearied the mind, and the soul of man feels that it must escape from all this roar" and turmoil and have quietness and solitude and be at peace.<sup>2</sup> It is precisely because the pace of life has proved to be too much for the peace of life, that the spirit has retreated from the bewildering and deafening complexity and confusion of our modern world to discover by itself and within itself the secret of contentment and the source of joy. Thus the very irreligiousness of modern living has made religion for multitudes of people more real than it has ever been. The discovery has been made that the irreligious life is an endless round of alternating strain and diversion; that what men are really laboring for is a meat that perisheth. A mounting discontent has been felt in an age of the crowd, of mass movement and mass thinking, of purely conventional and superficial ways of "enjoying life." Multitudes of people have reached the point where the strain and pressure of a purely secular existence have become intolerable. They were caught, as it were, in a net. The tyranny of things had reduced them to abject slavery. They were no longer free men and women. And the impulse to escape from all this, to discover a retreat of their own, where they could once more begin to live

<sup>2</sup> From a sermon reported in "The Christian World Pulpit."



in a sane, wholesome fashion, at last became irresistible. The center of interest was shifted from the external to the internal. They began to live within themselves instead of seeking to keep up with the tired procession of external occupations and enjoyments. As it had been, life was proving too much for the spirit. The return was made to the Spirit which was to show the true pathway into life.

Thus in our modern world has been repeated the experience of Catherine of Genoa of whom it has been written: Her inner life "was characterized to a remarkable degree by what may be termed rest or quietude, which is only another name for true interior peace. It was not, however, the quietude of lazy inaction, but the quietude of an inward acquiescence; not a quietude which feels nothing and does nothing, but that higher and divine quietude which exists by feeling and acting in the time and degree of God's appointment and of God's will. It was a principle of her conduct to give herself to God in the discharge of duty and to leave all results without solicitude in His hands." \*

Another influence which has caused this Retreat of the Spirit has been the secularization not of life, but of thought. The more, in a word, scientific and philosophical thinking has seemed to rob the universe of its spiritual garment and stripped humanity of its ideal elements, the more a defiant spirit has backed away from such a non-religious description of the world and of human personality, and has found the proof of its divine origin and destiny in the interior realm of the Spirit. A startling illustration of this is seen in the rapid spread of mystical idealism among the college-trained youth of our day. For years now they have been subjected to a non-religious interpretation both of nature and of life from many brilliant minds. Thus they have been taught that belief in immortality is not only unmoral but immoral; that all purposive action is a delusion, and man is no more capable of creative activity than the lowest animal

\* Mary W. Tileston, *Daily Help for Daily Needs*, Little Brown & Co. Pg. 330.

or the crystal in the test tube. Man has been described for them as "a small but boisterous bit of the organic scum that for the time being coats part of the surface of one small planet which is itself a cast-off fragment of a star." <sup>4</sup> It has been affirmed that he has no more reason for believing in his destiny than has "the merest insect that crawls from one annihilation to another." They have been assured that "a majority of all biologists, psychologists, physicists—and critical thinkers generally are either thoroughgoing mechanists or have espoused some form of pragmatic naturalism or neo-realism." <sup>4a</sup>

The effect of such teaching has been somewhat different from what might have been imagined. Without doubt it has swept many young people, for the time being at any rate, off their feet, and has confused the minds of others to such an extent that only after a long period of time has a mental equilibrium been recovered. But upon a large number of the most thoughtful and most capable college students the effect has been to drive them inwardly upon themselves to discover the source and secret of religious reality. Thus there has been a striking development of a personal religion among college youth. In some cases this has resulted in enlistment in the splendid altruism of World Missions or other forms of spiritual adventure. Others have been attracted by the movement now known as the First Century Christian Fellowship, which has won its way into college and university circles in many parts of the world. The basis of this modern religious appeal is the idea which runs through mysticism in all of its forms, that if the soul does not know God and enjoy Him forever, the cause for this must be sought not in the sphere of intellectual inquiry, but in the personal life itself. There will be found in the kind or quality of personal living some condition which if remedied or removed will reveal God as surely as the passing cloud reveals the sun. Harold Begbie has given in *Twice Born Men* a graphic descrip-

<sup>4</sup> Harlow Shepley, "The Origin of the Earth," *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, February 7, 1924.

<sup>4a</sup> Alfred E. Wiggam, *The New Decalogue of Science*. Pg. 257.

tion of the operation of this idea among representative Oxford men. The Reverend S. M. Shoemaker, Jr., has contributed in his *Children of the Second Birth* an important chapter to the literature of this subject. And the recent letters of the group visiting the South African colleges recount their adventure as "A miracle-working God Abroad." No one who knows the situation at all can be unmindful of the fine strain of spiritual idealism which runs through the most thoughtful element of modern college and university life at home and abroad. This has its roots in an apprehension of spiritual reality which is direct and mystical, and is not mediated, although it may be fortified, by intellectual or historical research. Thus, in one of our colleges the students have created a little sanctuary of their own, with its altar and quiet open spaces where those who will, come either individually or in groups, for silent meditation and prayer. A great hope for the future lies in this spiritual approach to the social problems which vex the mind of this age, born out of this renaissance of personal religion in the college-trained youth of today.

This same movement also can be traced outside of academic circles. More and more the persuasion is gaining ground that spiritual Reality which many scholars and scientists debate or deny can be discovered within the soul itself. Confronted by the terrific spectacle of a godless universe as it has been described to them, many people have fallen back upon the witness of the Spirit. They are having their misgivings about the ability of a purely naturalistic science to answer the questions on which a man's sanity and health and happiness depend. They are waking up to the fact that such a science really raises more questions than it answers. What a materialistic science and a mechanistic psychology have done for them is to create a world which appears like a nightmare. It has lifted the heavens so high up above their heads as to frighten them—so that they look around and feel that they will go mad unless there is intelligence and unless there is love there somewhere. They refuse to look upon themselves as insignificant insects

crawling around on the thin outside crust of a planet that is being hurled through abysmal distances at inconceivable velocity without an Eye to see or an Ear to hear or a Heart to care. They are listening to the voices of the Spirit, and they are believing what they hear. It is thus that scientific materialism, which is itself breaking down for wholly scientific reasons, has made for the rebirth of a personal religion.

There is one other cause for this Retreat of the Spirit within itself which must be mentioned. It is the discovery of the close relation of mind and body, of the interaction of the one upon the other. The pace of life in our modern world has been too much not only for the peace but for the health of man. Modern invention has placed more equipment at our service than we are able to handle. The nervous system has been overtaxed in the effort to utilize all of this apparatus. Convenient means of transportation carry us so easily that people are on the move all the time. When they are not moving, equally convenient means of communication pour a constant volume of talk and music into their ears. The invention of the motion picture makes an enormous demand on the emotions. The "new morality," by breaking down certain inhibitions, and justifying a radical departure from conventional conduct on the ground of the legitimacy of every form of self-expression, has involved many people in critical and tragical situations from which they seem unable to extricate themselves. The complexity of modern economic and social conditions has bewildered and baffled many others who cannot find their way through the network of "complexes" which encompass them. The result of all of this has been a weakening of nervous resistance and stability. There has been a large increase of every form of disease which has its roots in a disordered nervous organization. Hence neurology has become one of the most prominent departments of modern medical science. Psychiatry has developed a technique of its own to deal with these disordered personalities. And the cure for every form of such malady, it has been seen, lies in a re-organized and freshly fortified personality. The problem is in

essence a spiritual problem. Men have discovered that a new ego is what is needed. The first necessity is a reconstruction of the personal life.

Hence the resources of personality have been explored as never before. It has been discovered that here are unimagined and unutilized riches which, if developed and applied, will be able to meet every emergency with which one is confronted. The submerged and subconscious self, if roused to life and action, will throw over the habits, whether of mind or body, which enslave one, and usher him into a new life of freedom and of joy. Hence menti-culture in all of its varied forms has become one of the most serious interests of our time. And this, of course, is only to say that personal religion has come into its own. For while much modern neurological science has no definitely religious basis, and while many psychiatrists do not use a specifically religious method, it is extremely difficult to keep religion out of the picture, if by religion is meant the relating of the finite self to a higher and infinite Self in which it finds its freedom and salvation. This is so clearly recognized that many neurologists who are not themselves religious men, wish that they were. And they do not hesitate to appeal to the religious impulses of their patients, while admitting and sometimes deploring that they lack these themselves. No review of the religious life in our modern world can ignore or minimize this important aspect of the situation as it exists today.

Such, in effect, are the causes which have induced this modern Retreat of the Spirit into the inner sanctuary where God abides. The fact is that life has proved to be too much for the unaided human spirit. It has become melancholy and mournful. It needs to be reinvigorated and re-inspired by some power which lies outside of and above itself. People are coming to feel that nothing will save them but a great incoming tide of spiritual vitality that will lift them by its irresistible energy above the level of their depression, their fears and their doubts. And people are desperately in earnest about finding such power for

themselves. Many people have a feeling that they may be missing something of life. Perhaps they are being cheated. There may be a joy in this business of living which they have not discovered for themselves. They have a haunting sense that there is a secret somewhere which they have not discovered for themselves. Parents are conscious that they are not rising into the higher altitudes of parenthood. Friends realize that they are not discovering the higher ranges of friendship. In every department of life they feel that there is a possible freshness, a freedom, an idealism into which they have not ascended; that somehow they are missing the best in life—taking low visions of their nature, low visions of their relationships with other people; that the higher and better employments and enjoyments of life are somehow eluding them; that there is a blessed Beyond, a Reality somewhere, perhaps the realest thing that this whole universe has to offer, which they have not come to possess. They feel that when they read some biographies. They lay them down with a disquieting sense that these men and women possessed a secret to which they are strangers. They feel it when they watch some people of their acquaintance. Somehow these breathe a rarer atmosphere, radiate a holier spirit, their lives spring from some deeper source and inspiration than they themselves have known. Thus the recovery of personal inward spiritual power becomes the most critical question that confronts our present generation. That there is such power available is not open to debate. We find it in the New Testament in abundance. We cannot imagine people over whom St. Paul had breathed the prayer that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, worrying themselves because they had failed in business, or because they were bilious, or because members of their family seemed to be ailing, or because they did not know where the money was coming from to pay the next Roman tax-bill; or because they had not received the social recognition which they thought they deserved; or because some one had wounded their sensitiveness; or because of an hundred other causes one might name which make people so dejected today. On the contrary, as the whole

record shows, theirs was a fearless, triumphant kind of living. The soul was in the saddle and they rode forth, lance at rest, conquering and to conquer. And the secret of their victorious optimism was an inward and spiritual vitality which enabled them to meet and to surmount every emergency of experience.

Contrast with this the low level on which many people live today. "Consider for a moment the habits of life into which we are born. First there are certain social requirements and conventions which cause us a good deal of miserable and anxious forethought. Following close upon this, there is a long series of anticipations—that we shall or may suffer this or that disease, . . . while crowning all is the fear of death. Then, there is a long line of particular fears and trouble-bearing expectations—such, for example, as ideas associated with certain articles of food, the dread of the east wind, the terrors of hot weather, or cold weather, or wet weather, or dry weather, the fear of catching cold, . . . and so on through a long list of fears, dreads, worriments, anxieties, anticipations, expectations, pessimisms, morbidities," and the rest. "Yet this is not all. This vast array is swelled by innumerable volunteers from daily life—the fear of accident, the possibility of calamity, the loss of property, the chance of robbery or fire, or the outbreak of war. So that it becomes a habit of the mind always to expect the worst. And it is not deemed sufficient to fear for ourselves. When a friend is taken ill, we must forthwith fear the worst. And if one meets with sorrow, sympathy means to enter into, and to increase it." <sup>5</sup>

Is there any question about the accuracy of such a description? Is there any question also that the remedy for this condition of things lies in the discovery of an inward and spiritual power that shall lift one above such a low level of life, expel morbidity and fear, and enable one to face the stark realities of existence with confident courage and unshaken serenity?

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1902, pg. 98f, from H. W. Dresser, *Voices of Freedom* (N. Y. 1899), pg. 38.

The discovery of such spiritual resources thus becomes the major religious problem of our age.

Men have come to feel also that the recovery of this inward serenity and control will be found, in the long run, to be the only solution of our social problems. Dr. Dewey has remarked that the word "insecurity" defines better than any other, the kind of world in which we live. Trace all of this unrest to its source, and we find that source to be the restless human heart. This heart-restlessness has gone on in ever widening circles until it has literally covered land and continent, earth, sea and sky. How to put an end to our unrest? Only by putting an end to the restlessness of the human heart. In other words, the real problem before us is not an economic problem, and it is not a social problem. It is neither an industrial problem nor a political problem. In the last analysis, it is a spiritual problem. Human society, we have come to understand, is never going to be saved into sweetness and soundness except by the moralization, except by the spiritualization of its members. A right spirit will be far more searching, far more exacting, and far more effective than law, regulation or legislation. We must pacify the human heart before we can put the world at rest. It is only as the human soul discovers a spiritual power equal to the task of enabling it to control itself, that the soul of man in turn shall be able to penetrate all the perplexities of human relations and solve the problems of life in all of its phases. Upon the discovery of an adequate personal religion depends the ultimate settlement of all our affairs.

If all this be true, then the Church of our day, if it is to serve the age in which it finds itself, must organize its life to meet the spiritual emergency which is thus disclosed. Every generation presents its special task to the Church, the one institution responsible for the religious guidance of men. That task varies from age to age. It cannot be carried over from one generation to another. Its duty at one time ceases to be its immediate and insistent task at another. The emphasis needs



to be shifted according to the changing currents of need. Nothing is more difficult, but nothing is more important, than being aware of the exact religious emergency and organizing the life of the Church to meet it. And the present day calls insistently for a Church which will persuade men of the reality of a truly spiritual religion and tell them how to recover this for themselves.

The problem of the Church today, then, is not the historical problem. That was the problem a generation ago. The question then uppermost was whether or not there remains a reliable and an adequate historical basis for Christian belief. Hence the problems of Christian origins were acute and pressing. The historical study of the Bible took first place in the Christian mind. The verification of the fundamental facts upon which the Christian history depends was the major religious interest. But it is no longer the major religious interest. That is not to say that history does not have its importance. It has. The attempt has been made to preserve the spiritual teachings of Christianity while denying its historical foundations. But that attempt has failed, and it will always fail. Robert Keable in his *The Great Galilean* has tried to distinguish between the historical Christ and the traditional Christ. He has said that we cannot discover enough certain information about Christ to write a biographical note of decent newspaper length. The material in the Gospels cannot be accepted as trustworthy: we know less than nothing of the facts. Nevertheless we know, by what process we are left to guess, what the outlines of His spiritual teaching are, and there are no spiritual values known to us which are finer, purer, higher, more compelling, than those which we find in the Gospels. We are therefore to cling to them as "thought-forms even though we cannot root the tradition in historic fact." \* But upon such a foundation a truly spiritual religion can never be built. Faith cannot ignore history. The plain commonsense of the average man feels this,

\* See "A Christian View of Robert Keable," by Charles Fiske, *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1929.

and the point need not be argued. Yet the historical problem is not today the major religious problem for the reason that the main results of a vast historical research have gone far to substantiate the historical tradition upon which Christianity as a religion depends. That Jesus Christ lived, taught, wrought; that He died and that death did not end the reality of His Spirit, the sense of His presence and of His Influence upon the lives of His followers,—this at least remains as secure in history as any other historical fact of which we have any knowledge. Today the question is not chiefly an historical question. It is a profoundly spiritual question. It has been discovered that one may believe in Christ as a fact of history, but not derive from Christ the Spiritual truth and power which He came that men might have. It is possible to accept, upon purely intellectual grounds, the truth of the history about Christ, without discovering the spiritual Reality which that truth enshrines. The major task of the Church today is not the demonstration of the truth of Christianity as historical fact, but the reality of the Spiritual Power which the Christian faith supplies, and its adequacy to meet every emergency in human experience.

Again, the major task of the Church is not concerned with ecclesiasticism in any of its forms. That was once a matter of major importance, but it is so no longer except to the Catholic mind, Roman and Anglican. The idea that spiritual truth depends for its authentication upon a given form of ecclesiastical organization lingers on in the minds of some—but the mind of the age as a whole has risen above and beyond it. There was a day when matters of ecclesiastical authority were paramount, and each separate denominational unit struggled to maintain for itself special Biblical authority, and special worth in history or in performance. But that day is behind us. People who are most in earnest about religion are least concerned about the particular form in which that religious life shall be incorporated. It is felt on every side that if we were to begin all over again, no one would think of erecting the many denominational units that exist today. They are a tradition from the past, the im-

portance of which has largely disappeared. And that the religious life of the people as a whole would be immensely set forward if the units themselves should disappear also, is generally accepted and believed. This is so true that anyone today who argues the priority or superiority of his particular form of ecclesiastical preference, is talking in a language foreign to the mind of our day.

This is not to say that Christianity is independent of any incorporation of itself in institutional form; or that Christianity could continue to exist without a Church. No less a keen and independent thinker than T. S. Eliot has written: "Unless by civilization you mean material progress, cleanliness, etc., . . . if you mean a spiritual and intellectual coordination on a high level, then it is doubtful whether civilization can endure without religion, and religion without a church."<sup>7</sup> And even so radical a critic as Edmund Wilson in commenting upon this statement of Eliot's, agreed that without a Church you cannot have anything properly describable as religion. A religion, that is, is bound to incorporate itself in visible form. The spiritual life does not flourish in an atmosphere of pure individualism. The spirit of religion demands some incarnation, some place in history, some social outlet, some fixed tradition and disciplines. The soul has two sides: solitary vision or revelation, and then some incorporation of that vision in the actual life of the world. To maintain that personal religion obviates the necessity of any expression of itself in visible and institutional forms is to run counter to all that we know of religious experience either in the life of the individual or in the life of the world.

There is room, therefore, and there always will be, for insisting, in the interest of religion itself, on the importance of the institution of the Church itself, while insisting at the same time that argument and debate about the particular ecclesiastical forms in which the Church shall be organized are outside and

<sup>7</sup> Quoted from T. S. Eliot, "For Lancelot Andrews," in *The New Republic*, April 24, 1929. This subject is fully treated in the author's *The Christian Church in the Modern World*, Chapter II.

beyond the serious religious interest of the day in which we live.

Once more, the major religious problem of our time is not theological. Again we must qualify. If by theology is meant thinking about God, it must always be a major religious interest. Every age must make the intellectual effort to state in intelligible terms, and in the thought-forms peculiar to itself, the truths of religion. From this point of view, the popular distaste for theological and for doctrinal preaching in any form is wholly unwarranted. In any age like ours, when the whole concepts of the world in which we live, and of human personality itself, have undergone many radical changes, effort to integrate these with the fundamental religious ideas is of the utmost importance. No religion can long endure which does not rest on a thoroughgoing intellectual foundation; which does not receive the consent of the mind.

The kind of theological interest, however, which is remote from the religious temper and needs of our age is that which is largely or exclusively abstract or metaphysical. There was a time when this was the paramount interest. The Early Church fathers lived in an age when philosophy in one form or another was the chief vocation or diversion of all educated men. Therefore metaphysical theology became the great concern. The Christian apologists must vindicate the supremacy of Christianity over the ancient faiths in the current philosophical vernacular. The Christian theologians must find terms in which to express the new Christian ideas about God. Hence the high debates concerning the Logos, the Kenosis, and other doctrines. Hence the words "*homoousion*" or "*homoiousion*" and "*filioque*" caused men to range themselves in opposite theological camps. But to debate those or similar ideas today would come nowhere near meeting our present religious needs. Again, the Reformers were confronted by the task of producing for Protestantism a body of doctrine that would stand beside the formulated doctrine of the Roman Church. Hence the kind of theological interest which was carried from the Old World to the New, and

became for nearly two centuries the chief concern of the Church. There was a time here in New England when the ringing of a church bell would bring a multitude of people to hear a learned preacher expound the doctrines of Calvin or of Edwards. Preaching was largely devoted to an exposition and defence of theology. But how many people would respond to such a summons today, or listen with patience to such preaching? These theologies were not wrong. They were interesting, but they were also temporary. They were not the real thing, and gradually they were left behind.

It is the real thing that people are after today. They want to get at the Reality that is behind theology and of which the formulated doctrines of any age are simply the temporary framework. They want to know the Truth, but the Truth which they want to know is not the intellectual or formulated expression of the innermost essence of Religion, but that innermost essence itself. They want to know Christ as St. Paul and all the other mystics have known Him as "the power to become the sons of God." They want from their own experience to make the great discovery that if they can somehow apprehend Christ in this fashion, they will be "saved" in a very real fashion; that He will drive an evil influence out of their lives, and offer them an escape from the network of stark realities which encompass them, and give them the victory over themselves and over circumstance. In a word, they want religion before they want theology. And when they have found religion, they will accept any reasonable theological statement or description of it. A theology which is the attempt to describe in intellectual terms what already exists as a personal and inward experience is the kind of theology which meets men's needs today. But they need the thing described more than they need the description of it.

The message of the Church, that is, needs above all else to be a spiritual message. "Her primary duty . . . is to keep the channel open between the temporal and the eternal. . . . The enduring task and glory of the Church is to foster in man the

consciousness of God and to help him to union with his Maker." \* To offer men such a faith; to discover to them such a knowledge; to endue them with such a power; to offer them such an escape; to open to them the possibilities of such a life, this becomes the urgent task of the Church in the age in which we live. To offer to men anything else is to offer them a stone when they are really hungry for the Bread of life.

Signs are not lacking that the Church has begun to understand its particular task and mission in our modern world; to discover to men the reality of a Personal Religion. The real religious leaders in our day do not deceive themselves. They understand that these are hard and ominous days; that all is not well with the world, with the Church, or with men. The whole world lies in open, pitiful need. From everywhere there comes the cry for a new spirit. The only hope lies in a new vision of Christ and a new understanding of Him, such as only love can bring. We must discover Christ afresh. This is the conviction which now fastens upon the mind of all who know the real religious need of our age. We must get past the histories, the organizations, the theologies, and press on until we find Christ as the means by which the Power of God becomes the power of every human soul. The Church which does this, which endeavors to do it, which comes anywhere near doing it, is the Church to which our age will turn in gratitude and loyalty. In some way, it is increasingly felt that it is necessary to combat the growing secularization which is perhaps the chief characteristic of life in these days. Men have drifted away from God, and a sense of God. In the recent Lambeth Conference Report these words are found: "We are aware of the extent to which the very thought of God seems to be passing away from the minds and hearts of many even in Christian nations. Even where God is still acknowledged He is often regarded as too elusive and remote to be relevant to the practical concerns of life." \* The recovery of God and a sense of God becomes thus our chief task

\* Vida D. Scudder, *The Church and the Hour*. Pg. 27, 28, 37, 65-67.

\* From the Encyclical Letter, Lambeth Conference, 1930. Pg. 18.

and concern. And this can be done only by a recovery of a personal and inward religion. "The resounding din of organization, the hysterical activities of political propaganda, the quarrelsome conduct of advocates of exact theological definitions, the confused counsels of social reform, are not the sources from which to seek either the comfort or the inspiration of a devotional relationship between man and God. As Elijah in days of old, seeking to know God, found him not in the great and strong wind which rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still, small voice, so today God most surely may be found in the reverence of the reflective mind and in the sensitiveness of the willing spirit."<sup>10</sup> The Christian revelation for which we wait must begin with a new changed and regenerate individual. All betterment must begin with the personal life. Men must be born again from within into the Spirit of God—that is, into the Spirit of Love. Only men changed inwardly will bring to pass a changed world.

It remains only to sketch the way in which the Church is beginning to recognize its task and is gradually framing its method in order to meet it.

The Roman Catholic Church performs this mission today as in the past, by means of the Mass and its doctrine of the Sacraments. This doctrine is highly mystical, indeed to the undevout it appears almost magical. There is no question, however, with regard to its profound practical effect. According to this conception, the sanctifying grace of God is "the Divinely infused supernatural quality which permanently divinises the human nature to make it proportionate to its Divine End."<sup>11</sup> "It is a spiritual substance or transcendental presence committed by the heavenly Lord to the keeping of His earthly Church, which is the storehouse or treasury of His grace. . . . These Sacraments convey renewing, enlightening and sanctifying grace,

<sup>10</sup> President Hopkins, Dartmouth Baccalaureate Address, June, 1930, as reported in *The Boston Herald*.

<sup>11</sup> *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, S. V. "Grace (Roman Catholic)."

not merely as symbols, but as authentic channels. . . . The grace they impart is, as it were, a supernatural deterrent, antidote or antiseptic against sin, the medicine or elixir of immortality, and the stimulant or cordial of every virtue. . . . Christ, that is to say, is a Real Presence in the Sacraments. He is there to quicken and to sustain that supernatural life which it was the purpose of the Incarnation first of all to bestow."<sup>12</sup>

The Anglican Catholic Church takes much the same position. The Catholic Church is the supernatural body of Christ, and the Sacraments are the divinely authorized means of communion with Him. Thus the Catholic Church is the only "certain and covenanted" channel of Divine Grace. The communicant thus has the assurance when he receives the Sacrament according to Catholic tradition that he is laying hold of the life of God mediated by Jesus Christ and made visible and actual in the Sacraments.

It is evident from all of this that the life of the Catholic, both Roman and Anglican, centers about the Blessed Sacrament. "The Mass is the thing, is the statement that we hear over and over again. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is the center of Catholic practice. Frequent communions, reservation of the Sacrament, Benediction, and a large part of the individual private devotion of the Anglo-Catholic, all center about Our Lord's Presence in the Sacrament. To understand this trend, the reader needs only to imagine for himself the results of a faith that the bread and wine after consecration are the Body and Blood of Christ. If this is true, then the Holy Eucharist becomes for a faithful Catholic the greatest fact in the world, the most important fact in daily life. Daily Communion is the natural result for one who really cares. For the Catholic, the Person of Our Lord is the Blessed Sacrament, is the center and heart of his religious life."<sup>13</sup> For him, the problem of Personal Religion has been solved. He has received the gift of spiritual

<sup>12</sup> From "Sacraments and Unity," *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1914.

<sup>13</sup> "Where the Anglo-Catholic Stands," by Charles N. Lathrop, *Federal Council Bulletin*, November, 1930.



Reality and he possesses the secret of spiritual power. One need go no further than this to understand the hold of the Catholic tradition upon the modern mind.

Protestantism has never been able to accept this doctrine of the Mass. It is not able to accept it today. The whole task of Protestantism, therefore, is to discover for itself, and for its adherents a source of Spiritual Reality apart from the distinctively Catholic teaching of the Sacraments.

The history of Protestantism, from this point of view, is interesting and instructive. At its beginning, apart from its own view and practice of the Sacraments, it sought the communication of this Divine Grace through the spoken word. Down to the time of the Reformation the sermon had been a voluntary, an occasional, but not an essential part of the service of the Church. The central part of that service was the Sacrament. The Reformers, in introducing their protest against the doctrine of the Mass, altered also its position in the Service. Preaching as a means of the communication of Divine Grace had been neglected. Its place and importance were therefore advanced. The Word was incarnate not in a visible element, but in the human soul, and was an authentic fact to be communicated to men through the spoken word. No one can question the possibility and the reality of this method for the transmission of Divine Grace. The history of preaching in Protestantism and its effect on human character has demonstrated this beyond question or doubt. Yet, as time went on, two results appeared. The Sacraments fell into the background both in interpretation and use. To this day there is no uniform interpretation to be found in Protestantism of the meaning of the Sacraments. Preaching, on the other hand, became almost exclusively—at least outside the Anglican Church in its various branches, and the Society of the Friends—the method of imparting the Life of the Spirit. The pulpit displaced the altar. The Sacraments remained as a sacred tradition, but their position was subordinate, a pious addendum, as it were, to the sermon which was the centre and substance of the service. The Church became an

"auditorium," the congregation became an "audience." Worship gradually gave way to "hearing a sermon."

As this tendency developed, a subtle change overtook the nature of the preaching. As the sense of the reality of the mystical approach to God was weakened, preaching as the effort to describe and to transmit that experience was weakened also. It became ethical, hortatory, rationalistic, but without the suggestion of the mystical background and failing to communicate what was not felt or inwardly experienced. Hence, a subtle change overtook, also, the attitude and expectation of the congregation. The instinct of worship—a silent waiting upon God—became atrophied by disuse. Not only people no longer came to church looking for the Divine Grace, but they would not know how to apprehend this if that were what they came for. Ministers aware that the demand was for the sermon, neglected everything else. They lost all sense of the value of the service of worship and all knowledge of its underlying principles. Churches assumed more and more the appearance of lecture halls. They lacked every architectural and aesthetic element that would appeal to the spiritual imagination. Religion ceased to be a thing of beauty, it became a proposition. The "Services of Worship" became, too often, a noisy, inartistic prelude to the sermon. Organized for everything else: much given to sociability, busy about all kinds of good works, and providing sermons which purvey all kinds of information and often provide much intellectual entertainment, the Protestant churches failed to give what the modern world came most to crave: an inward and personal assurance of spiritual Reality and power. The Protestant Episcopal Church which approximated the Catholic interpretation and practice of the Sacraments, and the Quakers who held steadily to their doctrine of the Inner Light, thus found themselves better equipped than the rest of Protestantism to meet the demand, created by the conditions of our modern world, for an inward and personal religion.

Thus it came to pass that many non-ecclesiastical cults began to develop and to grow rapidly, which offered harassed and be-

wildered souls what they craved and groped about to find. Driven from the churches by the absence of any mystical appeal, by the failure to find any satisfaction for the worshipping instinct of the soul; above all, by their inability to find their way to the possession of any inward power which would give them the victory over bodily, mental and spiritual weakness and debility, they have sought for spiritual reality outside the confines of ecclesiasticism and the orderly channels for the communication of spiritual truth. They have turned, with the thirst upon their souls, to any source which seemed to promise the satisfaction which they sought: mental culture, various forms of spiritualism and theosophy, or faith-healing. And they have found what they sought. "And while all this has taken place outside the Church, the Churches themselves have been busying themselves with clubs and societies and sociables and all kinds of wholesome yet secular activity, concerning themselves with all kinds of secular subjects too, so that they have become forums for the discussion of any imaginable subject and problem that vexes the mind of man."<sup>14</sup>

It has dawned at length upon the leaders of Protestantism in our day that if their churches are to retain their hold upon this present generation, there must be an immediate revision of intention and method. The life of the Church must be organized to meet the demand for inward spiritual certainty and for the possession of inward personal power. Hence, we are witnessing a gradual transformation in Protestant Church thought and feeling and method. A movement is under way which is daily gaining in acceleration and method. This transformation is seen visibly in modern church architecture. The old "auditorium" with sloping floor, circular arrangement of pews and prominent central pulpit, is giving way to a church, with its chancel and central altar, which proclaims that Beauty and Mystery are the innermost essence of religion. A recovery of the liturgical element in the service of the Church, a knowledge of its rules and principles, is witnessed on all sides. This is a slow, and, in

<sup>14</sup> From the author's *The Holy Spirit*. Pg. 18-19.

some respects, a painful process, but the trend is unmistakable and it is all in one direction.

In a word, the tendency in contemporary church life is to recover the mystical emphasis. The ethical implications of the Gospel are not neglected. But it is rightly felt that the Gospel can be practised only as its spiritual message is first apprehended in the soul as living Reality. Personal religion, that is, underlies every attempt to make religion itself a regulating force in our disordered social and economic life. The only way that we can prepare our fatigued and neurotic spirits to come to grips with our social tasks is by a retreat into the innermost essence of personal and experimental religion, and a discovery there of the Reality which makes all things new. Such is the innermost meaning of the most significant trend in Protestant church life today. It is often asserted that Protestantism has no future; that Catholicism, on the one hand, or Communism, on the other, offers the only ultimate solution of the problems of human existence. It is probably true that a purely intellectualized and rationalistic Protestantism will fail to satisfy the poignant needs of the human soul, and succeed only in adding one more to the list of arid philosophies which "have had their day and ceased to be." But if the modern mystical movement in the Protestant church as a whole shall prove to be no mere imitation of a religious spirit alien to our own but the recovery of an authentic spiritual life which shall satisfy the deepest needs of the human soul, then the Church will have recovered its authority and power in our modern world. For a truly spiritual Church has nothing to fear.

It is quite apparent, to anyone who looks beneath the surface, that *reality* is being earnestly, if feebly felt after. More and more the Sacraments are coming into their own, both in interpretation and practice. Increasing numbers of Protestant Churches are providing for early communion services for small groups, without the intrusion of sermon or address. The element of silence is being introduced in the Service of Worship, recognizing that if the Church is to do its work, it must pro-

vide some relief from the raucous and continuous noise of the outside world. Classes in personal religion under the guidance of the Church are being offered to men and women who feel that they need to be trained in methods of meditation, in the control of their thinking, and in the practice of prayer. Preaching has remained and it must always remain a fixed element in the ministration of the Church, and in the communication of spiritual truth. But the preaching which today answers to the needs of men is not secular exhortation, literary disquisition or a purely intellectual argumentation. The preaching which best answers to modern needs is that which conveys the undeniable impression that the preacher himself knows what he is talking about; that he has himself been mastered by a great overshadowing spiritual reality; that he is seeking to pass on to others a Gift of God which he himself possesses in abundance. This kind of preaching is itself a Sacrament—a Sacrament both lofty and eloquent—the Sacrament of the Life of God, incarnate in a human soul, seeking to express itself to the hungry souls of other men.

For the soul of man in our day has retreated from the world without, and seeks to find and to know God within itself. And the Church which can truly minister to the soul of man in our day as in any other day, is the Church which can show men the way to Spiritual Reality and Power. The strongest foe within the ranks of Christianity today, it is felt, is "the lack of a true spirituality, of the capacity for aspiration and worship, in the leadership and membership of our Churches. Expansion and organization have been over-emphasized at the expense of inward communion. As a result the Christian workers we have sent forth have been most zealous in regard to proper methodology, sufficient modernization, rapid increase in building equipment, in numbers of converts, and external prosperity. But how many of them have sounded the depths of Christian experience and have truly striven to cultivate a vital life of the soul? How many of them have allowed their Master to take up His abode in their lives and permitted Him to accomplish that

which they could never hope to achieve? And the people will be like their leaders." <sup>15</sup> When we reach bed-rock and are firmly grounded in Christ Jesus, then is the time to reach out; otherwise our house will be founded upon the sands and cannot endure. We must listen for the voice of God speaking to our souls; lay deep the foundations of our spiritual lives. Then when we have learned to converse with God and thus to learn His will, then, and then only are we ready to lead others to the mercy-seat.

The closing verse of a too little known hymn of Charles Wesley describes with singular accuracy the religious mood of our modern world:

"From the world of sin and noise  
And hurry I withdraw;  
For the small and inward voice  
I wait with humble awe;  
Silent am I now and still  
Dare not in Thy presence move;  
To my waiting soul reveal  
The secret of Thy love."

<sup>15</sup> From personal correspondence.

## IX

### CHRISTIAN ETHICS

IRL G. WITCHURCH

AMONG Christians there is a growing recognition of the ineffectiveness of our so-called Christian morality. Formative trends in modern culture move in a direction quite apart from recognized Christian ideals. For the most part, the processes of our economic life are carried on in the independence of indifference to high moral standards. Tawney has pictured a devastating parallel between the course of our recent religious development and the growth of a capitalistic culture. And Weber has called attention to a Protestant ethic which began as a practical idealism and ends in an orgy of materialism. In America the venerable dogma of separation of church and state has far outreached its original intent, and political corruption has become an embarrassment.

This widespread recognition of moral impotence is more than a wail of complaint. It points to a deep-lying problem, one that can no longer be dismissed as a discrepancy between moral profession and practice. For one thing, this explanation requires an exorbitant number of hypocrites. More than that, it glides over certain important facts. At a recent conference on Christian morality in economic affairs a prominent layman laid down the principle that the first charge upon industry is a fair return upon invested capital. Is his position to be dismissed as only a stubborn case of perversity? His friends and acquaintances do not think of him as stupid or un-Christian. They would resent the suggestion that he is a hypocrite. A sympathetic writer, in dealing with our whole problem, takes as the theme of a recent

book: "It is a dangerous delusion to assume that a person who makes a sincere confession of faith in Christ will thereafter lead an ethical life. An abundance of evidence has already been cited to show that devout and conscientious Christians frequently ignore completely the most appalling human needs at their very doors and sometimes engage in diabolical practices." <sup>1</sup>

If the apparent unfruitfulness of Christian morality in modern life is a serious problem, and if it indicates more than a discrepancy between profession and practice which can be charged to hypocrisy, what other explanation can be found? No contention is more familiar than that which finds the source of moral failure in the weakness of the human will. This explanation is simple, and makes short shift of the Socratic maxim about knowledge and virtue. It sometimes appeals to the authority of Paul. But he cannot be made to carry such a load. It oversimplifies the problem, and leans on vague assumptions. A third attempt appeals to a well-worn sentiment that while a Christian should have moral ideals, he learns to be reasonably content with what is actually feasible under given circumstances. In this lie two unwelcome suggestions. First, a Christian ethic is too fantastic to be altogether practicable. Secondly, at any rate a Christian ethic is too exalted for our plodding human nature. In either case the original problem goes by default. A fourth type of claim starts with the suggestion that the nemesis of Christian ethics is its vagueness. In this view it is needful to ask, What is meant by a Christian ethic? Until this issue is faced, the announcement of its failure is premature. There is no point in declaring that a fogbank lacks definite contour.

To many the question, What is a Christian ethic? will seem preposterous. They reflect a traditional attitude on the significance of ethics for a religious outlook. In *The Ethical Teaching of Jesus*, Scott points out how dependent Christianity has been upon moral teachings for its continuity, and how spasmodi-

<sup>1</sup> Kirby Page, *Jesus or Christianity*. Pg. 278.



cally that dependence has been recognized. As a whole the picture is of a completed theological house, undergoing constant repair, with a side-room addition constructed as an afterthought for ethics. With the rise of a comparative study of religions the need of a desperate apologetic has brought some improvement at this point. Nevertheless what ranks as minor or incidental must suffer the nemesis of neglect and ignorance. Again, where the moral element is admitted there is much confusion of morals and religion, of ethics and theology. Not that a rigid partition between these aspects of the Christian life is either desirable or possible, yet the marks of this confusion can be read from standard works on Christian ethics, and the need for making salient distinctions is undeniable. But traditions aside, there remains the fact that a variety of answers has been given to this question. And this phenomenon of variety is passed over in a casual manner. One deadly assumption prevails: The content of a Christian ethic is a common heritage, a something that is obvious. The price of its understanding is exactly nothing—less than the cost of food for the body. The assumption is deadly, because it fails to give any distinctive content to a Christian ethic and so ignores any potential value it may have, and also because it pretends to have reached finality in moral standards at a time when thoughtful minds feel most keenly the need for finding more objective moral principles.

On typical conceptions, let us begin with Schleiermacher: "The Christian doctrine of morals should be the presentation of communion with God which is conditioned by communion with Christ the Redeemer, so far as it is the motive of all acts of the Christian—that manner of action which proceeds from the supremacy of the Christian religious self-consciousness."<sup>2</sup> Dissociated from theological jargon, what would Christian morals mean? In his *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, Dean Inge quotes Schleiermacher with approval, and seems undisturbed by its leaning to sheer subjectivity. The Dean goes on to state a second view as his own. By the "ethics of Christianity"

<sup>2</sup> *Christliche Sitte*, s. 33.

he means the "Ethics of the New Testament, and especially of the Gospels."

Judged by these two sources, Christian ethics appears to be something of a chameleon. In the former it tends to mean the conscience of a Christian; the latter approaches an "Ethic of Jesus." They are not mutually exclusive conceptions. Neither are they exhaustive. A third conception takes the ambiguous title, "Ethics of Christianity." Some speak as if it were a deposit of moral truth, unmodified through the centuries of the Christian church. In fact, it ranges all the way from interpretations of the "mind of Jesus" to a plastic body of conventional morals approved by members of a "Christian" community. A fourth type might be called, for want of a name, the "conscience of Christendom." It points toward a moral attitude and insight which finds embodiment in the mind of Jesus, viewed as a particular expression of a universal moral quest, as a commanding ideal for the more enlightened consciences of Christendom. Its general features are: The mind of Jesus is normative; it is the dynamic spirit of a good life, not a code of ethics or an *ipsissima verba* of a teacher; it finds opposition and confirmation in the universal moral quest of the ages; it is perpetuated in an historic community, with varying degrees of success; its embodiment is conditioned by the response of concrete personalities; a special responsibility for its promulgation rests with seekers after truth in moral experience.

It is commonly held that Jesus is normative in such an ethic. But which Jesus, and in what manner? Some have said, a teacher-Jesus found in the Synoptics, and an ethic which rests upon "doubly attested sayings." Others, an apocalyptic-Messiah of the first century in our era who stood for an "interim ethic" that is now obsolete; still others, a composite Jesus, reconstructed by biographer-historians, who shared current moral opinions; again, a host of theological Jesuses, each one of whom lends special sanction to the moral opinions of his devotees. All of these seem to miss the mark. They insist upon making the mind of Jesus a thing to be handled, an external authority to be

affirmed or denied. It would be well to recognize that authoritarianism in ethics is a mummy. The moral authority of Jesus depends altogether upon whether his principles get themselves validated in the highest moral experience of the race, and not at all upon the circumstance that they were formulated by him. It is the high authority of truth that men really need. Jesus can claim no special favoritism. Indeed, he seems to have no need for it. And the same applies to Christian ethics. It must exclude partisanship, for it seeks the embodiment of the finest moral insights of mankind. The term "Christian" is understood in a strictly normative sense. What are the outline features of such an ethics?

### 1. *Beyond Legalism*

As pictured in the Gospels the conflict of Jesus with a legalistic ethic of his day may be taken as a classic setting of the problem involved. To the Jew the Law was much more than a moral code. It was the supreme channel of divine revelation. Now, devotion to such a law knows only absolute commands. *First* among its fruits is a certain blindness wherein man becomes a pawn of laws. For interpretations gradually acquire the sanctity of the Law itself. The result is an intolerable confusion of values. Not inaptly are words like these put into the mouth of Jesus: "The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached." \* Or, one thinks of the familiar words: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."<sup>4</sup> A *second* consequence of legalism is that it obscures important distinctions between various laws. Jesus takes to task those who observe regulations of tithes, the minutiae of sabbath specifications, to the neglect of "justice, mercy, and faith." They are indeed blind guides "that strain out the gnat and swallow the camel." \* More reprehensible is the mind that places murder, bearing

\* Luke 16:16. American Standard Version.

<sup>4</sup> Mark 2:27.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 23:24. American Standard Version.

false witness, adultery, on a par with matters like eating certain kinds of food. This outlook evoked a revolutionary principle. "Hear me all of you, and understand: there is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man." And there is no uncertainty about the kind of thing that brings moral contamination.<sup>6</sup> In the *third* place, in a legalism the moral life may become an affair of conventional adaptation. Exclusive devotion to formal correctness of conduct will reduce morality into a conscious parade before men, and rob it of an objectivity-seeking attitude so indispensable to moral health. At its worst this emphasis fosters professional goodness, the development of false pride, and ends in duplicity. In the heat of controversy Jesus flings at some good legalists these fiery words: "Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."<sup>7</sup> Deeper still is rooted a *fourth* defect—a false simplification of moral experience. Not that all over-simplification is due to legalism, but legalism is its chief ally. The point seems indelibly impressed upon the mind of Jesus. He plies the art of question, of repartee, and of parable to shock men out of their pathetic faith that valid moral insights are an obvious affair. On every hand he met this insipid assumption. It plagues humanity still. In a *fifth* direction lies the inability of legalism to meet concrete and changing conditions, and so every moral code is destined for obsolescence. To be altogether effective legalism requires a standardized agent and a static environment. The Scribes and Elders who try to meet vital processes with formal prescriptions are pathetic figures. Their work of interpretation is a self-defeating process. The defect is inescapable and incurable. *Finally*, a legalistic ethic withers a moral life by cutting its tap-root: a personal responsibility for the conscious willing of moral values. Of course, the choice of values is always

<sup>6</sup> Mark 7:14f. American Standard Version.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 16:15. American Standard Version.

concretely conditioned. For all that, it is none the less a process of conscious willing. Goodness or badness in character is not an accident; nor is it something thrust upon us by the gods. One's moral life feels the impact of so-called accidental elements, and also factors largely beyond human control. But experience is ever an active and interpretative process, an organic whole in which no datum remains datum, purely and externally given. Still stands the ancient imperative: Consider and choose! For in that region lies much of the distinctive worth of morality.

## *2. The Inward Life*

The problems associated with legalism are not confined to any people or period. They are living issues, and ever recur in new forms. Legalists are a product of one way of approaching moral experience. The primitive mind in all of us finds it easier to deal with the action-side of our neighbor's living. Much the same attitude continues to function in an "observational standpoint" of scientific method. Accordingly, ethics always includes a trend of thought with primary emphasis upon rightness or wrongness of behavior, on moral prescriptions and rules of conduct. Goodness is found in actions that measure up to good form. The outer-deed-side is the one accessible lever for the routing of human behavior. The moral now reads: "Thou shalt do." Utilitarianism in its many forms marks the culmination of this general approach. For example, John Stuart Mill translates the moral outlook of Jesus into a legalism, and then writes: "In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility." \* About twenty years later, Leslie Stephen, an exponent of the same general view, expressed the opinion that every great moral revolution had come with a clear enunciation of the principle that morality is internal. His statement is worth recalling. "Christianity gave prominence to the doctrine that the true moral law says 'hate not,' instead of 'kill not.' The men of old time had forbidden adultery; the new moral legislator forbade lust; and his great-

\* *Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government*, Ch. II.

ness as a moral teacher was manifested in nothing more than in the clearness with which he gave utterance to this doctrine. It would be easy to show how profoundly the same doctrine, in various forms, has been bound up with other moral and religious reformations in many ages of the world." \* The full significance of this statement emerges as the author proceeds to translate the principle of inwardness into a dogma of externality. His general approach had set the sails in that direction.

In the better trends of Christian tradition prominence is given indeed to the principle of inwardness. That is in line with a great tradition of ethics. Socrates, Plato, and the Stoic had each given notable formulation to the doctrine. The idea is formally rooted in the better moral tradition of the Jews. And the chief reason is not far to seek. Fundamental in this notion is the declaration of the supremacy of the spiritual life for the individual. It parallels the development of human liberty, and is not less important by reason of its familiarity. This supremacy is asserted in four directions. *First*, the primacy of spiritual values. In the *Apology* Socrates addresses the Athenians: "My good sir and fellow-citizens in the great city, renowned for wisdom and strength, are you not ashamed to be anxious about the greatest amount of money and reputation and honor, and at the same time to neglect wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, having no appreciation of their value?" That insight has belonged to all great seers, and no generation can afford to neglect it. It was said of Jesus: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."<sup>10</sup> He occupies a place of undisputed rank because in his character may be found a vindication of spiritual values as supreme. He sought and found the life of the kingdom of God; he shows that such life is also the salt of every earthly realm. Jesus makes clear that character values organized by the spirit of righteous love are the

\* *The Science of Ethics*, C. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907. Pg. 148.

<sup>10</sup> John 1:4.

intrinsic worths and the everlasting reals. Of this truth men cannot too often be reminded.

A corollary of this principle is the relative independence of the good life of institutions and things. In this note the modern mind locates the danger of a one-sided asceticism. Are not institutions and properties the indispensable instruments of a good life? Yes. Aristotle said that, and all experience confirms it. But Aristotle and great moral teachers have been careful to safeguard statements along this line. They know the way institutions and properties have of ceasing to be instruments of a good life by edging across the indistinct borderline between end and means. Instruments and the good life are so intricately interwoven that few are able to keep them in right perspective. And so it is not historical accident that the profoundest insights into true greatness for man have come from individuals surrounded by a minimum of indispensable institutions and stage properties. The crumbling city states of Greece, the Jewish exile, the loose-jointed and top-heavy Roman empire, gave opportunity for the Stoic sage and for Jewish prophets with unsurpassed moral vision. Situations like these help awaken the suspicion that the readiest critics of an ascetic morality really scent in it a soul-regenerating life. And this always imperils institutions and properties that have become the bulwark of unjust privilege. Plato the aristocrat dreamed of men who could rightly manage the institutional side of life because their sole possession was a gold within their own souls. Jesus repeatedly warned his disciples of the costliness of the truly good life. There is in him a rugged independence with respect to the "world." And the most irrelevant of all apologies is that which roundly affirms that Jesus was not an ascetic. A record of the main impression he left with successive generations looks in another direction. He renounced because he knew what to affirm.

A third direction in which the doctrine of the supremacy of the spiritual life moves is the recognition that the fountain head

of morality is the choices of free personalities. By this is meant that moral judgment deals primarily with the will-aspect of a situation; for sake of brevity, moral evaluation focuses upon whatever expresses will or personality in action. In part, at least, this underlies Kant's famous dictum: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good, without qualification, except a good Will."<sup>11</sup> Our individual native equipment, circumstances reasonably beyond our control, consequences not logically implicated in the direction of our willing—all these fall without the radius of moral responsibility. Not that they are altogether irrelevant, but that the focus of moral judgment is elsewhere, in the elements of personal choice. Attitude is the doorway to consent, and so to the response of a rational being. Of course, attitude is an aspect of intelligence. And the moral obligation to become intelligent grows right where moral response takes its direction. Properly understood, the inwardness of morality cuts across the familiar division of morality into either a series of motives stripped of consequences or of consequences detached from a total personality. Moreover, as T. H. Green points out, in the end moral progress is *of* personal character and *to* personal character, "a progress in which feeling, thinking, and willing subjects are the agents and sustainers."<sup>12</sup>

Finally, through the primacy of the spiritual we are led to the idea of universal brotherhood. That ideal has had a long and checkered history. To this day many are uneasy in its presence. For the idea is loaded with tremendous implications. The price of its discovery is beyond computation, and the cost of its realization will be greater still. For every individual has intrinsic worth that awaits recognition. In early Greek literature ran the saying that "strangers and suppliants come from Zeus." The early Israelite learned to respect the stranger, having himself been without a country. There is a familiar sound in the warning of Jesus that associates strangers and angels. His ap-

<sup>11</sup> *Metaphysic of Morality*, Sect. I, Pg. 241.

<sup>12</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*. Section 185.



preciation for inconspicuous personalities, his patient and deep sympathy for the nobodies of his day, burned deeply into the memories of those who passed on the story of his life. Judged from the external point of view, these persons failed completely to register; they had "nothing" to recommend them. How different, if you once affirm the supremacy of the spiritual! Goodness and intrinsic worth are in principle brought within the reach of all, and on two grounds. First, goodness is conditioned by an attitude of will. The divisions of class and of caste, of race and rank and creed become incidental features of human life. Fundamental attitudes of will have their source deep in the recesses of the individual; the critical part of the answer to one's moral destiny lies within. Secondly, if the spiritual confers value, the dignity and potential worth of every man has been conceded. The Stoic said that this credential of every man is the gift of Nature, and on this he builded a cosmopolitanism. But a more important phase of the doctrine appears in connection with the notion of a Kingdom of God. The will necessarily expresses itself in outward action. Much of its activity is within an order of things governed by the law of mutual exclusion. Conflict can be resolved only on one condition: the supreme value must be spiritual, and therefore non-competitive. Such a good cannot be regarded as appropriate to one set of men to the exclusion of another. On this subject no teaching has equaled the record of Jesus and the words of Paul. Numerous references in the Gospels show how Jesus utilized the child to illustrate the intrinsic worth of the individual and his place in the Kingdom. From the external point of view the child is without worth. As a spiritual life in its most unsupported form, he is an especially apt symbol of universal values. Paul stands on the same high level on this point, and his words abound in enthusiasm for humanity. "For in one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and we are all made to drink of one spirit."<sup>1\*</sup> In pressing the quest for the universal and deeper values of the human spirit

<sup>1\*</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13, American Standard Version.

lies the justification for emphasis upon the inwardness of the moral life.

### 3. *The Good Will*

Every student of ethics is familiar with the charge that a morality of inwardness is sterile, or something worse. The good will is supposed to be either empty or vicious: empty, because it accomplishes nothing beyond a mere wish; vicious, because it is capable of throwing a mantle of rightness over capricious action. The value of this objection is that it points to a certain incompleteness of the statement that morality is internal. Goodness may well have primary reference to a total quality of spirit in the agent. Beyond that it is essential to define carefully that quality of spirit. First, it is an attitude of supreme regard for the highest spiritual values. In Plato, in the Stoic and in Kant, this takes the form of respect for the rational selfhood in men. Stating the great principle of the Gospels, Kant said, "Treat humanity whether in thine own person or that of another always as an end, never as a means."<sup>14</sup> Paul wrote to the Colossians: "Above all things put on love, which gives cohesion to the perfect life."<sup>15</sup>

A second characteristic of a good will is disinterestedness. It assumes that moral values are grounded in the ultimate structure of our universe, and that on paying the price men can discover them as ends to live by. Such a presupposition seems quite essential to the reality of the whole moral enterprise. Negatively, it excludes an interest in material rewards, a wage or a merit system. This is part of Kant's meaning in: "Duty is the necessity of acting from respect for moral law."<sup>16</sup> Disinterestedness means to take a supreme interest in the good for its own sake. Long ago Plato argued that becoming like unto God was not an idle venture. And while the Synoptics are not in verbal agreement on the subject of reward, the parable of the laborers

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.* Sect. II. Pg. 277.

<sup>15</sup> Colossians 3:14.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.* Sect. I. Pg. 249.

in the vineyard may be taken as a high mark. On the reward level, it is a glaring example of injustice. Is this a method by which a great teacher would drive his hearers to a new standpoint in which the Kingdom life is incommensurable in values below the supreme, and hence the only motive is regard for that life? And are we near the reason why sin is pictured as inner darkness, a moral obtuseness? An evil disposition disqualifies one for fellowship with God; it obscures the highest values, most of all the true worth in other men. Its major forms are such as lust, an insolent pride that despises others, violent and insulting speech, moral insensibility. For the latter there is no forgiveness, because such a person is impervious to the spirit of righteous love. Moral vision is a function of character. Only the pure in heart can see God clearly and disinterestedly.

Third, a disinterested moral vision completes itself in appropriate action. A good will, therefore, is marked by a spontaneous naturalness of self-expression. True goodness moves into expression with the unaffected grace and naturalness of a growing lily, the very opposite of a Solomon straining to make an impression. In the Gospels Jesus frequently summons to his aid the unconscious processes of nature to portray this aspect of goodness. A city set on a hill cannot be hid; a light shines; salt preserves; leaven works; seeds that are properly planted grow; a tree bears fruit. Throughout the dramatic scenes in the parable of the last judgment, the most remarkable feature is the element of surprise. There is action enough. It emanates from very different kinds of persons. Some had striven for approval eagerly enough, and others had acted with entire candor. All of them were surprised at the judgment, a judgment wherein sincerity is the touchstone of goodness.

In the fourth place, with a good will there is self-expression as opposed to external control. This quality of inner self-direction is incomparably expressed in the Gospels and in the writings of Paul. There the spirit of the good will or love is self-directed in ways consistent with its own nature; it is not swayed

hither and yon by circumstantial forces. The beginnings of this principle found notable expression in Plato. On reading the *Gorgias* one is struck by the repeated insistence that it is better to suffer injustice than to do it. Vindictiveness poisons the one who harbors it. The doctrine attributed to Jesus about loving one's enemies is inescapable. He concentrates upon a goodness under extreme provocation. Do good to them that hate you. Bless them that curse you. Pray for them that despitefully use you. Turn the other cheek.<sup>17</sup> It appears that he lived that way—surely an impossible procedure unless one knows the meaning of forgiveness. Among Christians this teaching has had large emphasis. And no one who sees forgiveness in this light can think it a sign of weakness. Rather does it require the strength of one who knows complete self-mastery in the interest of the highest values. Something similar must be said for the much maligned idea of meekness. A meek man is ready to waive so-called rights in order to retain the right of complete loyalty to supreme values. There can be only one incalculable loss, namely: the integrity of a good personality. This is the supreme sin against the Holy Spirit. Paul binds this double aspect together in his sublime chapter on love. Such a good will shines by its own light; it is autonomous.

Finally it follows that a good will faces the future in a confident expectancy of rational development. Two things are involved. First, a good will thrives in an atmosphere of creative freedom, not that of drudgery enforced by external law. It is a long way by which mistrust of the human spirit is overcome. Legalism is the monument of that mistrust. It seeks to hedge about the spirit of life by codes, as if the opportunity for freedom could lead only to moral suicide. Secondly, in the spirit of the second mile, the good will discovers its content within concrete conditions of history and individual relations. Much unintelligent criticism has been made of formalistic ethics; Kant's maxims are not specific enough on the content side. But once the moral process is understood, does not this supposed

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 5:38-44.

weakness point to a profound insight? In the end the human spirit must be trusted to face the open road of discovery.

#### 4. *The Good Society*

Moral responsibility is indubitably personal. Moral achievement is *of* a person and *to* a personality of a specific kind. And so it is common tradition to portray the quest of the good life as a lone and individualistic enterprise. That is one side of the story. As ordinarily understood it makes two faulty assumptions. One is that every person knows what values constitute the good life and actually desires to achieve it. The other, that persons, like physical objects, are atomic entities related only in space-time-quantity terms; persons resemble marbles, and as isolated bits are controlled by external forces. The better ethical tradition has never accepted this general view. In the Western world the science of ethics was inaugurated with the question, What is the good life? No intelligent person takes such knowledge for granted. In unparalleled fashion Plato combines this question with a recognition of the social nature of man. Both elements are included in Aristotle's three indispensable conditions of a good life: a sufficiency of material goods, leisure for mental development, and friends. Since then goodness is acknowledged to be a gift of society *to* the individual as well as an achievement *by* the individual. That means a common obligation and task, in respect to the organization of the world of things and of persons into helpful relations. These two aspects of the environmental conditions for a good life present the gravest issues for the future of the human race. For convenience let us isolate the problems involved.

a. *Property*. In a general sense property means the use and control of things by persons. Overshadowing every demand is that which says that modern society must develop a new philosophy of property. Tinkering here and there with the present machinery is not enough. To divert attention to palliative schemes of other techniques of distribution is ostrich strategy. Questions of this nature are important only after the main issue

has been faced. Old defenses of our *laissez-faire* philosophy of property are weakening beyond repair. Stupidity alone continues to say that economic processes are governed by impersonal natural laws. Things belong to the world within man's mastery and control. That responsibility is now vaguely recognized by all who are to have a voluntary part in the next civilization. Labor, use, or merit theories of property are rationalization schemes. The new philosophy of property calls for a complete moralization of it. Its central principle is: Property borrows its essential value from moral personalities. Positively, property is an indispensable factor in the making of a good life. That factor must be available for all men. There is an economic margin below which life cannot be human. No one has a moral right to property in excess of what he can use for strictly moral ends in himself and in others. Excess poverty is a social crime at this point and for this reason. The same is true of excess wealth. The New Testament wearies many by its repeated warnings concerning the peril of riches. Tirelessly these writers try to show how love of the "world" brings on a blind frustration of the highest meanings of human life. History supports the truth that lies back of these warnings. The intricacy of modern social relations only accentuates this truth. Excessive love of property prostitutes the moral personality of those who possess or are dominated by the desire to do so. Under modern conditions others are dragged with them into this cave of human sacrifice. Refined as is this process of human sacrifice it violates the growing conscience of mankind. This placing of things above men, of economic value above moral meaning of life, is scheduled to pass to the abode of child exposure and cannibalism. One thing alone can prevent that: that mankind shall decide against the whole enterprise called civilization. Stated in its lowest terms: Property is one of the indispensable conditions of a morally good life. That way of life is the moral right of all men. Therefore, society must and will organize property to that end.

b. *Persons*. Viewed as a developmental process, human ex-

perience is one of gradual release from slavery to things, and of learning how to utilize things to support and give expression to the enlarging life of the spirit. The disastrous conditions of modern industrial societies are not the symptoms of retrogression. They are only contemporary problems that mark man's slow progress toward a higher freedom. At first, creature-man lived by bread alone. Only gradually is he learning that other values are worth living for. These higher values emerge only in relation to persons. Persons are, therefore, another of the indispensables; indeed, persons are the most crucial part of the environment of a good life. They alone demand my respect. Their attitudes and responses enter most deeply into my character. Only by patient and united effort can our moral possibilities become actualities. The crux of race relations lies here. Exploitation of every hue is rooted in a false sense of superiority. Men must come to acknowledge humbly a common spiritual life, supreme over all. In this common good something more is contemplated than polished civil states. That strange doctrine of the "new birth" can teach us at this point. Such an ideal reality Paul undertakes to describe in the twelfth of Romans. Here social relations are seen as a mutuality of imperfect yet developing persons, dominated by a supreme spiritual reality and held within a common bond of love. False individuality drops away. The very essence of the moral demand is for a universal common good; a good that is common because the law of mutual exclusion within the physical world does not operate here. A truth, beauty, goodness, shared does not impoverish the giver. On the contrary such goods multiply by "division." But a realm of a truly common good can be established on no other basis than the supremacy of spiritual values. These values are found only in persons.

c. *Education.* No tinkering with techniques for distribution of property, nor the conditioning of personal attitudes through "happy family" pabula, will penetrate beneath the surface of our problem. Nothing short of remaking human lives in terms of ultimate reality will suffice. Man is part of a greater cosmos.

He finds life only in relation to its reality. It is futile for him to deny or ignore or try to compromise with that fact. Reality in man must be trusted to lift man to the plane of harmonious relationships. This entails an increasing knowledge of reality and education in the broadest sense as the method of progress. As yet educational processes have advanced only here and there beyond a dogmatism about elementals. Not infrequently such dogmatism parades as established findings of the sciences. But all authoritarian dogmatism throttles the spirit of rational freedom, the primary requirement of the educational process. If man is ever to find a highest common good, he must consciously face the issue of *what* is the highest good, and *how* to obtain it. Education is, therefore, not least of the gifts which society must provide for all of its members.

The presuppositions of a "Christian" ethic would require another chapter. That cannot be attempted now.



## X

### THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

CHESTER C. McCOWN

#### THE BACKGROUND OF JESUS' MESSAGE

HISTORICAL perspective is as necessary as artistic. In no case is it more essential than in the interpretation of Jesus. Professor Henry J. Cadbury has put the matter into a neat equation. In the search for the modern application of the teachings of Jesus, which may be called  $x$ , the other three quantities may be known. Jesus' teachings as given in the Gospels may be taken as a given quantity,  $a$ . The conditions of his time,  $b$ , and today's conditions,  $c$ , may be learned if we are willing to study ancient and modern social history. The equation is, then,  $x : c :: a : b$ . As Jesus' teachings were related to the conditions of his time, so the modern application of his message must be related to modern conditions. But before the equation can be solved, the three quantities,  $a$ ,  $b$ , and  $c$ , must be known.<sup>1</sup>

The mastery of the text of the Gospels does not make Jesus' teachings known. They must first be thoroughly understood in relation to his times before it can be assumed that they are a known quantity and therefore before it is possible to apply them to modern problems. He was not talking over the heads of his audience to future generations in all the lands of the earth, but dealing with the sins and shortcomings, the problems and perplexities, the hopes and fears of the people immediately before him. The world's creative geniuses in philosophy, ethics, art, and literature have their timeless and eternal values, not because they ignored their contemporaries and consciously looked

<sup>1</sup> *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. XV, 1922. Pg. 5.

to the future, but because they understood their own times so clearly and dealt with them so fundamentally as to penetrate through the contemporary surface to eternal truth. The interpreter must be able in some measure to follow them into the problems of their times.

Jesus and his age had a certain inheritance of language and ideas which he perforce used in order to make himself intelligible. He could but live the life and speak the language of the people whom he taught. He and his audiences had certain problems which they must solve if they were to enjoy the satisfactions of life. The purpose, method, and content of his teaching were necessarily developed out of and suited to the situations with which he had to deal. What, then, were the conditions under which Jesus taught, and what were the problems with which he wrestled?

### *The Material Inheritance of Jesus and His Age*

As a Palestinian, Jesus inherited a peculiar complex of economic conditions. The land where he was born, lived, and died was one of the poorer and less productive lands of the earth, and the Hebrews were usually confined to the least fertile and accessible portions of their little land. The religious tradition and the cultural inheritance of the Hebrews bound them to ideals of political and economic independence which belonged to nomadic and agricultural life and forbade commerce.<sup>2</sup> Industrial civilization was unknown to them, city civilization abhorrent.

The loyal Palestinian Jew, therefore, was economically dependent on the meagre produce of his stony hills. No Palestinian group of any race or age ever made any significant contribution to material civilization. Still less did the Hebrews of Palestine ever develop any considerable material wealth or commercial resources. Even their Nabatean cousins, with their capital at Petra in a land much less richly endowed by nature, far surpassed them for nearly a millennium in everything that per-

<sup>2</sup> Josephus, *C. Apion*, I, 60f. (12).

tains to material prosperity. Absence of luxury and an invigorating climate produced in the Jews a race that was intellectually keen and physically fertile, sturdy, and adaptable. The material inheritance of Jesus and his people was meagre in the extreme, barely enough to keep an intransigent soul alive in a vigorous body.

### *Jesus' Economic Outlook*

As has long been theoretically recognized but too often forgotten in practice, the interpretation of Jesus' teaching must reckon with his individual economic background. Jesus belonged to the artisan class in a small and obscure Galilean village. Galilee was much more fertile than Judea. It was crossed by many trade routes, and Nazareth itself was not secluded, for some of these trade routes passed almost at its doors, while the capital city, Sepphoris, was less than five miles away. Jesus doubtless had many an opportunity to come into contact with the great world of the Roman empire. Greek cities were all around. Perhaps he labored as a carpenter on the houses or walls of Sepphoris and on the boats of Capernaum and Ptolemais. But in any case he was only a skilled workman. His was the social consciousness of the working man. He knew the hunger, the hardships, the anxieties, the simple pleasures of a laborer's life in a country village. From personal experience he understood the woes of the poor and the injustices from which they suffered, and his keen sensibilities were never poisoned by the touch of wealth or power.

### *Jesus' Spiritual Inheritance*

If the material inheritance of Jesus was meagre, and his physical inheritance excellent, his intellectual and religious heritage was superlatively fine. The keen-minded, far-seeing Hebrews sat on their stony hills and watched the world pass by their very doors. They lived in the midst of the greatest civilizations of antiquity. They borrowed their material civilization, their pottery, their metals, their architecture, so far as there is record with-

out creative addition or alteration. In things of the spirit they borrowed but transformed. They laid all their conquerors under intellectual tribute, and what they used of others' ideas was spiritually transfigured. As the polytheistic puerilities of the Babylonian cosmogonic myth became the chaste monotheism of the Creation story, so other ideas, Babylonian, Egyptian, Persian, and possibly Hittite also, were transfused in the clear heat of Hebrew social and religious thinking into spiritual wealth that has enriched modern civilization.

A dominant feature of their pattern ideas the Jews owed to their nomadic ancestry and their cramped material inheritance. Even down to the end of the first century they proclaimed as their official social ideal a simple pastoral and agricultural life.<sup>a</sup> Their prophets, like moralists in all ages and climes, laid to undue wealth and luxury the social evils which began to appear as population increased, and called upon their people to return to their old simplicity of living. Their civil, political, and religious legislation as well as their uncoded ethical ideals were centered in and suited to a pastoral and agricultural civilization. A life of strenuous labor, of simple wants simply satisfied, in households of approximately equal political, economic, and social rank, this was the Hebrew ideal. Rulers and riches were alike evils. This does not mean that poverty was ever glorified. No Hebrew regarded it as anything but a calamity. The average Old Testament view held riches to be a sign of divine favor, poverty a punishment for sin. The more realistic and ethical vision of the prophets, psalmists, and apocalyptists discovered that as a rule riches and power were acquired or accompanied by wrongdoing and that poverty was usually the result of social injustice, and they believed that eventually, when the divine laws ruled the earth, inequalities of wealth and power would disappear and all men would enjoy the good things that God had created for man's use.

Among the Hebrews pronounced mysticism was practically

<sup>a</sup> Josephus, *C. Apion*, I, 60f. (12); I Mac. 14:8-12; Ecclus. 7:15; 20:28; 26:29; I Kg. 4:25; Mic. 4:4; cf. 2 Kg. 18:31; Is. 36:16.

nonexistent. Of the two principal tendencies, the priestly and the prophetic, the one glorified sacerdotal regularity and ritualistic conservatism and tended to represent vested interests. The other stood for the multitude, the poor, the socially underprivileged. In Jesus' period the canonization of the Old Testament and the elevation of the scribes and rabbis to quasi-divine authority as interpreters of the Law tended to make Judaism officially subservient to legalistic, ritualistic ideas and standards, to the exclusion or at least the eclipse of the ethical idealism of the prophets. Jesus took his inheritance from the prophets. His thought was thoroughly ethical and he demanded that religion should first of all be moral.

As so often happens with dominant political parties, both Pharisees and Sadducees were unresponsive to the real problems of the day. The parties of protest were numerous. One was the "fourth sect" for which Josephus knows no name, the revolutionaries. Still another was to be found in the apocalyptic sects which Josephus does not mention, but which have left a larger body of literature than any other contemporary group. They were the successors of the prophets, the champions of the poor and oppressed. They represented all possible revolutionary tints, from dreamy pink to screaming red. They included the H. G. Wellses, the Upton Sinclairs and the Lenins and Trotskys of the time. They held the most diverse views on the purpose, methods, and results of God's governance of the universe, yet they agreed upon two things: at the moment Satan was in control of human society but his authority was soon to come to an end and the will of God would rule in a world subject to his law.

These ideas were not peculiar to Judaism. Indeed it may plausibly be argued that they were borrowed from their neighbors, some from the Egyptians, some from the Sumerians and Babylonians, some from the Persians. For three thousand years at least the ancient Orient had been waiting for the coming of a divinely blessed and guided ruler who would right the wrongs of the poor and oppressed and reign in truth and justice.

In the west, Hesiod had sung of the return of the Golden Age. When Jesus was born, Vergil had just prophesied the coming of the child under whose rule the visions of the Greek farmer-poet should be realized. Augustus, the reigning Emperor, was hailed as a prince of peace, a restorer of happiness, a savior of the world. For more than four hundred years the Greek world had been seething with social discontent. Utopias, communistic and otherwise, had been sketched and even attempted. Slaves had risen in rebellion. Philosophers and moralists had castigated the individual and social sins of their generations. The Cynic preached the simple life. The Stoic talked of the divine Father and of brotherly love. The alchemy of Hebrew spiritual insight transformed the old Semitic myths of a semi-divine king and a Garden of Eden into the expectation of a future messiah and a coming kingdom of God.

In interpreting the meaning and evaluating the appeal of Jesus' message, it must not be forgotten that he was a citizen of the world, not merely of Palestine. Jewish ideals were not produced in isolation. Jesus himself did not grow up in a hermetically sealed social compartment. He may never have heard of Plato or Socrates, but there were certain great ideas which were the common heritage of all the ancient world. Men everywhere believed that divine justice was destined eventually to triumph over evil and oppression. They could not believe that their God-given ideals of righteousness were forever to be flouted by human selfishness and greed. A part of Jesus' inheritance is to be found in this ancient civilization to which he and his nation belonged. It is against this cultural background that he must be placed if we are to see him in proper perspective.

### *The Problems of Jesus' Age*

The problems which Jesus and his contemporaries faced were many and difficult, as varied and troublesome as human nature. They may be labeled political, racial, economic, religious. But, though the difficulties comprised under these various categories can be logically distinguished, they cannot be separated in prac-

tice. In summoning their countrymen to religious and ethical standards superior to those of their neighbors, the prophets had taught the Hebrews that they were a peculiar race definitely chosen by God as his own people. Unfortunately very few caught the vision of Second Isaiah that theirs was to be a superiority in suffering and service. Their failure to realize their national hopes, their enforced subjection to the Gentiles whom they despised, embittered them. Emphasis on outward form at the expense of ethical warmth and spiritual insight was robbing religion of its vitality. Economic limitations due to their unfortunate position in a less fertile land placed by its relation to the Roman empire in competition with countries more favored by nature, due also to the expert exploitation which the Roman understood so well, bred discontent and dissatisfaction which worked like gangrene in every member of the body politic and poisoned every social relation.

Above all the multitude suffered. The Sadducees knew how to profit by their fortunate position as political and sacerdotal heads of the community. They reaped a rich harvest from the legal income of the Temple as prescribed by the Law as well as from agriculture, commerce, and extra-legal and illegal methods of exploitation. The scribes and Pharisees were not so blind and stupid as they have often been painted. They did all that their theories of divine revelation allowed them to do in the way of adapting old laws to new conditions, but the outcome was often only the addition of new burdens to laden shoulders. Their remedy for law-breaking was to create new laws to be broken. The sensitive, conscientious soul wasted his energies over trifles. The average individual gave up in despair and abandoned religion or beguiled himself with subterfuges and rationalizations. Worst of all, Jewish social life was embittered by its innumerable divisions and by the sufferings of the multitude from unscrupulous richer brethren and unsympathetic, self-righteous religious teachers.

The Essenes offered a monastic, communistic life as a refuge from reality. The apocalyptists offered iridescent dreams of a

terrible, divinely wrought catastrophe in which the wicked, at whom the righteous could now but gnash their teeth, should suffer condign punishment. They envisaged thereafter a new world in which the righteous should enjoy the rewards of their goodness and compensation for their sufferings. The revolutionaries presented a program of activity. Revolt against heathen oppressors and ungodly Jewish rulers would summon divine wrath and power to their aid, and speedy relief from all their sufferings would be their reward. The Sadducee practised supine submission and assimilation to Gentile standards. The Pharisee and the scribe, the apocalypticist, and the revolutionary urged bitter and uncompromising resistance to the pressure of the dominant civilization. The pious Jew paid his taxes while he gnashed his teeth in impotent hate and dreamed of divine thunderbolts annihilating his oppressors.

Under such social and psychological conditions religion necessarily suffered. It was inextricably bound up with business and politics. It sharply handicapped the Jew in economic competition with the Greek. It gave a divine sanction to racial pride and to political hopes and ambitions which were absurdly impossible, and which, being frustrated, worked like gangrene in the spirit. It did not offer any solid basis for a permanent or even a temporary adjustment to social conditions which the Jew could not alter. It offered a solution neither for problems of the social group nor of the individual. The words of Jesus are completely misinterpreted unless read against this complex social background.

#### THE MESSAGE OF JESUS

What message did Jesus proclaim to his distracted nation? To a people that was seething with hatred against its enemies, hesitating constantly on the verge of insurrection, he preached the love of one's enemies and nonresistance to unjust attack. To men suffering from economic exploitation and injustice with all of their attendant social ills he proclaimed the values of the simple life and the evils of wealth. To the legalist he pro-



claimed the superiority of conscience and common sense. To the ritualist he proclaimed the sole validity of social morality. To the materially minded he preached the supremacy of the spirit. To the poor he proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven, in which all conditions were to be reversed and all inequalities smoothed away, was just at the door. To the rich he declared that wealth would almost inevitably prevent them finding favor with God and enjoying his reign of righteousness. Only a miracle could save them from his wrath. To all he proclaimed that a loving heavenly Father ruled the world.

### *Jesus' Point of View*

How is this ruthlessly simple, humanly impossible message to be understood and applied? Detailed interpretation of individual passages or ideas in Jesus' teaching can be attempted only when proper allowance has been made not only for the conditions he faced, but for his point of view, purpose, and method. It is as important to know what Jesus did not mean to say and do as what he did intend.

This much must be granted to Tory individualists like Dean Inge: Jesus' point of view was not sociological. He was no political economist. He was not concerned with society, but with personality. His thinking was concrete and individual, not speculative or philosophical. He did not consider the duty of the individual to that abstract entity, the social group, nor did the obligation of the social group to the individual trouble him. If every individual did his duty by every other individual, society could be left to itself and to God. The perfect social order, the reign of God, was soon to begin; men must understand and practise its laws now so as to be ready for its advent. Jesus' point of view was not individualistic, but it was individual.

Jesus did not face the duties of the citizen in a modern democracy. There were no legitimate means by which he could shape or even protest against the policies of the empire. He could and did do all that was possible to any Jew toward cor-

recting evils within the social and religious life of his own nation. He protested against abuses, he roused public sentiment, he even took swift and spectacular action, in one instance, clearing the Temple of its grasping concessionaries. But he never was a village elder. He never had an opportunity to show how he would deal with the practical problems of Temple organization, or the prevention and punishment of crime, or the relief of unemployment. The problems of modern world civilization were entirely beyond his horizon.

### *Jesus' Method of Teaching*

In his teaching, moreover, he made constant use of the case method. He dealt with individuals, with actual problems. He approached social problems only through the individual's relations to others. Not abstract principles, but concrete advice applying to particular instances makes up the bulk of his recorded teachings. The abstract principle is always inferred from the individual case. Naturally, therefore, many of the most pressing problems of modern society are never mentioned in the Gospels.

Above all it must be borne in mind that he was not a teacher but a prophet. His disciples called him *rabbi*, "my teacher," because the prophet was no longer known in Israel. But all men recognized instinctively that he taught "as one having authority, not as the scribes."<sup>4</sup> He was anything but the instructor who in calm and orderly sequence unfolds an ethical or religious system. As someone has well said, he did not open his portfolio of lectures on Sunday morning and say to his disciples, "Now, where did we leave off on Friday?" He was a prophet proclaiming God's will, a reformer crying out against wrong, a preacher calling to repentance. He was not dealing in the lawyer's spirit with little casuistical matters of mint, anise, and cummin. He was pointing out the ideal both in his words and in his conduct, leaving it to men to struggle up as near the ideal as possible and trusting the outcome to that inherent goodness

<sup>4</sup> Mark 1:22.

which he believed dwelt in every child of the loving heavenly Father.

Because he was a prophet, Jesus demanded an unflinching conscientiousness, an incredible one-sidedness, an indomitable devotion to duty, which repel the indolent and the selfish, but draw thoughtful, warm-hearted, self-sacrificing natures to him with bands of steel. One must be willing to give up all that is dearest—wealth, position, friends, family, everything that men naturally treasure—for the sake of the right. Neither compromise nor weakness can be tolerated. There should be one husband, one wife, no divorce. The eye that lusts is to be plucked out, the hand that itches for gold cut off. The rich young man must give his whole fortune to the poor. There can be no half-way measures. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way. Jesus demanded a military obedience, a militant aggressiveness of his followers. He had come to make war on the devil and all his works. There was no place for turning back, no time for delay.

Even if Jesus had not himself again and again condemned literalism and legalism, such rhetorical overemphasis should in itself have taught men the absurdity of taking any single statement as a command, a law to be literally obeyed. What Jesus expects is the full devotion and free obedience of sons of the loving heavenly Father, not exegetical niceties, legalistic subtleties, and casuistic subterfuges on the one hand, nor painful literalism, inhuman asceticism, and fanatical puritanism on the other.

An excellent illustration of the difference between letter and spirit is that most hotly disputed question, divorce. No critical and unbiased student of the Gospels can reach any conclusion except that Mark <sup>6</sup> and Luke <sup>6</sup> correctly report Jesus' words. "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery." If Jesus had originally made the exception which Matthew <sup>7</sup> introduces, it is hardly possible that Mark and Luke would have set up a standard so much harder and

<sup>6</sup> 10:11.

<sup>6</sup> 16:18.

<sup>7</sup> 19:9.

higher. But is this surely authentic saying of Jesus to be taken literally as a legal enactment? The heartless cruelty and cynical casuistry, and the open immorality so often practised in those churches and nations which have made the Gospel passages legal standards are a sufficient refutation of the argument. Jesus was protesting against the notorious laxity of contemporary Jewish practice. The enactments of an ancient or a modern Moses dealing with human frailties are not the ideal but they are necessary, and if, and only if they are framed with the ideal in view, they may be most salutary. It is the spirit of Jesus which should determine the Christian's attitude. Authoritarian literalism completely misrepresents his real intention.

### *The Fundamental Idea*

The emphasis of Jesus is the matter of significance. Unfortunately his own voice is difficult to distinguish through the tones of his reporters. Greek words do not carry the same connotations as the Aramaic in which he taught, and still less does English. Moreover each of us tends to hear what he himself is thinking. We so easily distort the message in modern renderings of it. It is easier to manufacture a modern "Jesus-stereotype" than to penetrate through the fogs of misunderstanding and misrepresentation to the real Jesus. Yet the great majority will agree that the heart of Jesus' message lies in his command to love God with all the heart and one's neighbor as one's self. Nearly all will agree also that these familiar injunctions of Jewish ethics receive a new warmth and power through Jesus' conception of God. The idea that God is a heavenly Father was new neither to Jew nor Greek. But Jesus' conception of the divine fatherhood was so marvelously tender and yet so deeply reverential that, seen through it, the whole universe becomes new. For him God was anything but the Great Unknowable, the Absolute, the Infinite. He was not at all the Great Avenger nor was he a benevolent Autocrat, a doting Parent, or any of the many things which minds less keen and hearts less warm have made them. He was tran-

scendent in love and kindness, infinite in care and solicitude for the least of his creatures, yet terrible in righteousness and unswerving in justice.

Surely no true Father could look on in supine indifference while his stronger children abused the weaker ones. Nearly all students of Jesus' life agree that he himself is the most fundamental part of his message. The Christlike God is a more important shibboleth for modern Christianity than the Godlike Christ. Jesus was anything but an ascetic. He enjoyed the beauty of the flowers. He rejoiced in human companionship. He went to the wedding, he dined so often where food was plentiful that he was called a glutton and a drunkard. There is nothing in his life or words to indicate that he despised the good things of the world. They are infinitely inferior in value to things of the spirit. But the world which the heavenly Father created is good. It is to be enjoyed by all. Wealth as such is not evil, but only wealth enjoyed by a few while the many starve, or wealth so used as to sap the vitality of the soul. A heavenly Father who frowns on his children's pleasures is unthinkable. Equally is a God who condones sin foreign to the clear-visioned conscience of Jesus. Evil exists and the wrath of Jesus blazes out against it like a consuming fire. Even though we allow that Matthew 22 did not come in its present order from the mouth of Jesus, even though we agree that early Christian polemics which are anything but Christlike may have colored the disciples' reports of Jesus' strictures on the Pharisees, is it possible that he never criticized formalistic hypocrisy and self-righteous narrowness? Both Christian and Jewish scholars, in a laudable anxiety to smooth away modern occasions for interracial and interreligious bitterness, seem to forget that Jesus' criticisms of ritualistic and legalistic hypocrisy are as applicable to certain phases of modern Christianity as they ever were to Judaism. They forget that the Talmud appears to say just as hard things of some of the Pharisees as ever Jesus did.

Moderns are constantly overlooking the fact that there was

no "gentle Jesus meek and mild" except in relation to children and the childlike. He looked with divine compassion on the sheep wandering without shepherd. He had no word of reproach, no gesture of resistance for those who tortured and crucified him. But for those who made religion a mockery by their stupidity and self-righteousness, who used its forms as a compensatory substitute for right living and lovingkindness, who in their greed made it a pretext for gain, who preyed upon the defenseless, he had only the most bitter, the most scathing denunciations. He would have fallen far behind the leaders of his own people had it been otherwise. The ancient prophets and contemporary rabbis would have been superior to him. The conscience of mankind would never have bowed to him had he failed to cry out against social wrong and economic injustice. Passage after passage in Jesus' teaching indicates that he shared the faith of the ancient Orient that divine justice would eventually do away with all inequalities and triumph over grasping pride and selfish oppression.

*The Emphatic Phrase—The Social Ideal*

To express this faith Jesus used an ancient Hebrew and oriental idea couched in a postexilic phrase, the "reign," or "kingdom of God." The expression had the most diverse connotations and implications as regards the beginnings of this ideal state, its duration, its extent, its inclusiveness, its transcendental or physical character, and the person of its ruler. But there is one thing it always meant: that is that God's will should be obeyed, that wrongs should be righted, that evil doing should be punished and righteousness rewarded. What the wrongs to be righted were varied with the experiences of those who used the term. Yet most of the Jewish literature which uses it was dominated by the spirit of the prophets and psalmists who cried out for vengeance on the rich, the haughty, and the powerful, and praised God's care for the fatherless, the widow, the stranger, and all of the poor, the helpless, and the underprivileged. When Jesus says that the reign of God

and its benefits belong to the poor, the sorrowful, the hungry, the persecuted, his words must be interpreted in the light of the widespread faith of the ancient world, especially as voiced in Jewish literature, that some golden day God would reign in righteousness and put an end to all injustice and oppression.

In recent years the attempt has been made to deny the social value of Jesus' ethical teachings because of the apocalyptic connotations of the phrase, "kingdom of God." The argument runs thus: If Jesus believed that the kingdom of God was coming in the near future by some catastrophic intervention of divine authority which should miraculously overthrow and punish evil and reward righteousness, then his teachings are only intended to tide his followers over the terrible period of distress and woe which, according to the apocalyptic faith, is to precede the establishment of the divine government. It is a merely "interim morality" which he preached, with no validity for the long centuries of subsequent history.

That this view of the catastrophic coming and miraculous character of the kingdom of God was common in Jewish and early Christian circles no one can doubt. It was a view eminently suited to current cosmological and theological speculations, whereas the conception of natural law and the modern evolutionary view which provides a natural basis for the idea of a gradually developing and extending reign of God were absolutely foreign to the ancient mind. Yet it does not logically follow that there is no social gospel. It does necessarily follow that the Christian social gospel cannot be touched with the slightest taint of literalistic interpretation. It can only be based upon the principles or better still the spirit with which Jesus approached the problems of conduct. The methods to be applied in each generation depend upon current conditions. The spirit in which they are to be applied is always the same.

Even if it had to be granted that Jesus accepted a catastrophic, mechanical conception of the coming of the kingdom of God, his unsparing criticism of social and economic injustice still stands as the reasoned view of the cleanest, clearest-

mind, most unselfish soul the world has known. His judgment still stands that the possession of wealth is the greatest possible handicap to righteous living, that things of the spirit are of infinitely greater value than material goods. It is still true that few men can resist the temptations to which wealth, power, and social position subject them. The love of money is the root of all evil, greed and envy are the chief causes of the sufferings of the world, whether Jesus ever lived and taught and died, or not. If all men were willing to concede to others the same rights and privileges which they demand for themselves, ninety-nine per cent of the social and economic evils of the world would disappear at once.

Jesus' alliance with the apocalyptic point of view, which cannot be denied, makes him at once the foe of the rich and the friend of the poor. The person who insists that, because Jesus' teachings represent only an interim morality, they therefore have no social value, shows entire lack of perspective. The more completely apocalyptic Jesus was, the more uncompromising is his opposition to the dominant political, economic, and social ideals and practices of ancient and modern times.

Clearly his ideal was that which the ancient world in its better moments throughout the three thousand years of its history had acknowledged. Justice demanded that no man should lord it over his fellows in selfish pride and power, that none should be unduly rich while others suffer soul-killing poverty, but rather that all should enjoy the blessings of earth in common, those who have more aiding those who have less. Jesus went far beyond the common view when he outlined his conception of greatness as preëminence in service. In this he recognized the inevitable inequalities of human society, demanding, however, that superior endowment or opportunity should not puff a man up with pride nor fire him with selfish ambition for personal aggrandizement, but rather spur him on to achieve the more for the general good and for the sake of the less privileged. The greatest should be the servant of all. The highest self-realization is in achievements for society.



In view of the conflicting reports in the Gospels on the admittedly confused and confusing complex of eschatological doctrine, it will never be possible to determine exactly what Jesus did believe as to the physical nature of the kingdom of God and the time and manner of its coming. If he is not to be taken literally, it is not a matter of practical importance, for the social and moral implications of that emphatic phrase are so clear that he who runs may read. It sets before men's eyes as the ultimate ideal a society in which, to use Matthew's phrase, the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven. It is left to men to discover the path to the ideal, an ideal which, according to Jesus' principles, cannot be imposed from without but must first be achieved within the individual and then will necessarily bear its outward fruits in society.

### *The Validity of Jesus' Social Ideal*

These things being true, there can be no question of the validity of Jesus' ideals for the modern world. To be sure, on the surface a strong case can be made out against the applicability of Jesus' teachings to modern times. A Jew preaching to Jews in one of the poorest, obscurest, and most backward provinces of the Roman empire, a small town carpenter dealing in the spirit of the ancient Hebrew nomadic-agricultural ideal with the problems of Galilean peasants under the autocracy of Rome, how can he know modern perplexities and difficulties? How can he legislate for modern society in a world-wide civilization of inconceivable complexity? The point is that he was not legislating for his own or any age. He was dealing with individual and social problems which are rooted in nature and in human nature. Though his cases are drawn from his own social experience, his principles are based on fundamental psychical factors which are the product of tens of thousands of years of human evolution and will not be altered in many tens of thousands more, until the human race has ceased to be what it is.

Unlike Plato, for example, Jesus committed himself to no

particular organization of society, to no theory of the state. On no true principles of exegesis can his counsel to the rich young man to dispose of all his wealth be taken as a law for all to follow. There is nothing in his teachings to condemn capitalism or communism, laissez-faire or socialism, or any other economic order, unless it can be shown to contravene his principles of brotherly love, or to tempt men irresistibly to unbrotherliness. If it does that, then no measure to change it can be too costly.

Jesus believed thoroughly in democracy in the sense that the weakest and poorest should have his chance. But he never committed himself to the eighteenth-century banality that all men are created free and equal. When he insisted that greater opportunity and ability obligated to greater service, this should not be interpreted to mean that the strong shall be leveled down to the standard of the weak. It would be as unjust for the weak to prey upon the strong as for the strong to prey upon the weak. Be it remembered that Jesus condemned the petty anxieties of the poor for material things as much as he condemned the grasping greed of the rich. Hatred, greed, and envy are as wicked in the hovel as in the palace. In the democracy of God each person helps the other to the best of his ability.

In general Jesus prescribed no methods or means by which the proper organization of society should be achieved. He left all this to the divine plan for the future, which means in reality that it is left to the ingenuity and wisdom of each age as it faces its own problems. The Marxian principle being essentially true that society in each period will inevitably be shaped by its fundamental economic organization, it necessarily follows that any teacher who binds himself to a particular type of social organization will eventually be hopelessly antiquated. This fate Jesus escaped. He may never have envisaged the long centuries of social evolution which lay before the movement which was to follow his death, but his method, purpose, and spirit have left to his followers the progressive

discovery of the truth. The spirit of Jesus is the spirit that leads into all truth, social as well as religious.

In one matter of method, however, he was explicit and final. The one means of social reform known up to his time was armed revolution. His own people were hesitating on the verge of that abyss at the time. In unequivocal terms he condemned all methods of force and violence. Jesus taught no non-violent resistance nor civil disobedience. Indeed, he advised his people to pay their, no doubt unjust, taxes to Cæsar. He counseled them to do exactly what any people must do that would make itself strong and independent, to set its own house in order, to reform the evils within before complaining of injustice from without. His countrymen refused to listen to him. They brought about his execution, they persecuted and excommunicated his followers. And eventually, saner measures of reform being rejected, the parties of protest fell under the leadership of hot-headed revolutionaries who brought the nation to the verge of destruction. History then, as in scores of cases before and since, has thoroughly justified Jesus' attitude toward violence.

However, that Jesus' teaching necessarily implies Tolstoyan anarchy is surely a most illogical conclusion. If the principles of interpretation for which this paper argues are right, it cannot even be claimed that Jesus explicitly condemned war. What he actually said was that no man should resist or return personal insult and injury by hate and cheap retaliation. It is quite a different matter if the bully assaults the weak, if the brutal prey upon the helpless. No one can say what Jesus would have done if he had seen some drink-crazed brute assault a woman. Yet there are few who will believe that he would merely have lifted his hands to heaven in prayer. What he insisted upon was the entire absence of feelings of vengeance and retaliation for personal injuries and the presence of active feelings of good-will toward all men, even toward one's enemies. In the light of such principles of conduct the use of police force in times of peace and of arms in times of war

must be judged. Jesus certainly did not favor the revolutionary party among his people. Whether he would ever have approved war or revolution under any circumstances is quite another question. But there can be no doubt that war is intrinsically evil because it directly contravenes the basic conception of Jesus' thinking, that all men are children of a loving heavenly Father. Modern experience brands it as the cause of countless social ills. Like slavery, it is, to quote Albert Einstein, "an antiquated, barbarous institution," and civilized states must discard it or they will return to barbarism.

Numerous methods commonly used to improve society prove valueless when measured by Jesus' conception of morality. If real goodness is the product of the inner disposition, then any measure which secures outward conformity without the full participation of the inward spirit produces hypocrisy. The end never justifies the means. Not only do war, the class struggle, and armed revolution violate the principle of goodwill, but they cannot accomplish the regeneration of society because they depend upon physical, not moral, force. They cannot reach the springs of human action. Social reform instituted from above cannot save society. Absentee philanthropy, paternalistic welfare work, and bureaucratic charity are of no permanent value. Slums must be swept away as breeders of crime and disease. But this is dealing with symptoms rather than the malady. Clothes affect but do not make the man. An efficient reform will fully enlist the people who are to be reformed. The spirit of a man must be won to the ethical acceptance of the truth before it has any value for him. Morality based on social pressure is no morality at all.

Men cannot be saved nor society regenerated by the scribal method of making laws. Jesus does not condemn law as such. But his method is ethical, not legalistic. Love, not fear, is the true sanction of the law. Men must be won to the right, not forced or frightened into it. Society can be regenerated only as men come to take the attitude of Jesus toward one another.

The process is too slow for man's impatience, but it is the only sure method.

#### APPLICATIONS AND MISAPPLICATIONS

An adequate discussion of the social message of the church would record the sad chapter of its loss—how Jewish millenarianism, Hellenistic mysticism and otherworldliness, Greek philosophical speculation, imperial politics, pagan ritualism, ecclesiasticism, sacerdotalism, and monasticism stifled the dominant ideas of Jesus. It would tell too how the Lutheran doctrine of the state and the Calvinistic ideal of thrift and industry assisted in developing modern nationalistic antagonisms and competitive commercialism. "The successful man of business, if he is not a child of the Ghetto, is usually a grandchild of John Calvin," so it is said. It should never be forgotten that the World War cut short in its infancy one of the most promising periods of social reform that America has ever seen, nor that the filthy backwash of the War has flooded the world with ritualistic formalism and superstitious mysticism as well as cynical disillusionment. It would be dishonest not to recall how the church has allowed itself to be dominated by prevailing political and economic tendencies. Accredited representatives of the church have blest war and slavery and the liquor traffic. They have told the poor to be content in their poverty and to seek in the next world compensation for the wrongs which Christian employers were inflicting upon them. Churches have profited from breweries, distilleries, houses of prostitution, and unsanitary tenements, from the twelve-hour day, child labor, and the sweatshop. Too often social service has been a compensation for social justice withheld. Too often the pulpit has preached of heaven instead of social reform, of fasting and prayer instead of honest ballots and uncorrupted courts.

An adequate discussion would be illuminated also by an account of the strivings of the churches for a better social

order. It would describe the nondoctrinaire "love-communism" of the early church. It would record how Anabaptists and Fifth-Monarchy men strove to set up the kingdom of God on earth and how some of the modern churches have striven to recover the ideal of an earth ruled by the will of God. It would tell of Christian socialists, of "social service," of social settlements, of "reforms" innumerable, antislavery agitation, the temperance movement, and how many more! In spite of the social conservatism which has alienated many of the labor group, church organizations and bodies of church men have made some of the finest and most progressive statements on the difficulties and the rights of labor, on war, and on other social problems. Moreover let it be remembered with rejoicing that Christian ideals have spread far beyond the church. Individual employers and firms have made bold and sometimes highly successful ventures in conducting business and industry according to the spirit of Jesus. They have adventured upon remarkable experiments in industrial reorganization. Non-church agencies continually take up social tasks which the church once had to perform, leaving the church free to pioneer in new fields.

Any adequate discussion would try to appraise modern society in all its complexities, weighing its tendencies in the factory, the garage, the store, the bank, the stock market, in the executive's office and the director's meeting, in Tammany Hall, the White House, the Senate chamber, at the polls, in the school, the country club, the theatre, the art museum, and especially in the church, in the bishop's chamber, the denominational secretary's office, and the parish house. The doctrines of consumptionism and mass production need careful appraisal as to their ethical outcome. A new moral code and new moral reactions must be developed to govern life under the load of machine production. It must be asked how largely the church in America is dominated by the megalomania which infects all society. Is spiritual progress measured by the cost of church buildings, the size of church memberships, and the amount of

contributions for charity, or by the administration of justice, the removal of causes of crime, and the election of wise legislators and honest executives? Innumerable attempts have been made to measure civilization by the standards of Jesus. One remembers Walter Rauschenbusch, Harry F. Ward, Jerome Davis, Halford Luccock, and a host of others. The effort must never cease.

### *The Social Message of the Modern Church*

Until man is much wiser than he now is, it will not be possible to arrive at unanimity of opinion on social and economic problems. But the first step will be taken toward the happier future when the contemporary forms in which Jesus clothed his teachings are forgotten and the fundamental elements in his message made the message of the Christian church. It would be a magnificent stride in advance if the difficulty of applying Jesus' teachings to modern society were once recognized by the church at large. There are certain fundamental social problems, such as the change from an agricultural to an industrial civilization, which tremendously complicate the problem of applying to modern conditions teachings originally spoken to a predominantly peasant group. New doctrines and practices, such as mass production and mass consumption, confuse the vision and befuddle the brain. But perhaps the chief difficulty is that men are so occupied by discussions of details that they do not see how completely revolutionary Jesus' principles are. The emphasis of modern legislation is on the rights of property rather than of persons. Modern industrial and commercial organization puts profits before personality. Professor Coe well says that the present economic system "organizes, endows, and idealizes selfishness and lust for power. The nationalism of today is one of its culminating points." \* In other words, our economic system and current political theory are utterly and absolutely unchristian.

\* "What's Coming in Religion? The Main Stream and the Eddies," *The Christian Century*, December 31, 1930.

What then is the social message of the Church today reduced to its simplest and most fundamental terms? First of all the church must inspire men to faith in the Ruler of a moral universe, a God who, whatever his other qualities, has the characteristics of the heavenly Father of Jesus. The second thing the Church, as well as the world, needs to learn from Jesus is the supremacy of things of the spirit, the relative worthlessness of material things. Third, the Church and the world must learn that no social or economic or political order is sacrosanct but that this and every generation of Christians must demand such changes as experience shows will bring society nearer the Christian ideal of a human brotherhood lived under the law of a loving heavenly Father. The fourth thing to learn from Jesus is that it is the supreme duty of the Church to inspire men to Christlike conduct. Without it the most perfect system of economic or political organization will fail. There must be moral preparation for a new social order. It is not the duty of the prophet to frame economic programs or manage practical politics. The Church will inspire honest and unselfish men to seek solutions of society's problems which will accord with the ideals of Jesus. The Church will insist that intelligence and enthusiasm but not fanaticism shall guide the search for a better social order. If it is true to its master, it will never allow its own wealth, the ambitions and needs of its great philanthropic enterprises, or the wealth of its members to shackle it in its search for the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The preacher may lack the practical temperament and the technical knowledge as well as the time necessary for undertaking such tasks himself. But it is his duty to insist that the principles of Jesus shall guide the business man, the social reformer, the politician, the statesman, the ecclesiastic, indeed every man in every walk of life in all his doings. The prophet will never hold his peace while social wrong goes unrebuked, while men flout the principles of Jesus.

Finally, perhaps the most important item in the modern social message is directly applicable to the Church itself. Dog-



matism and literalism have betrayed ecclesiastics and theologians into far worse crimes than those of the bootlegger and racketeer. Internal division and decay are more weakening than outside attack. The Church cannot save society because it is itself socially unregenerate. The various sects cannot live and work together in the spirit of Jesus. In proportion as Christians unite, in spirit if not in organization, to embody the principle of goodwill, the kingdom of God will come.

It is a noble and arduous adventure to which the Church must summon the world, an adventure which demands the keenest and most critical intellects that modern society can produce, that demands the most indomitable perseverance and courage. In the path of progress lie innumerable obstacles, the inherent conservatism which fears social change, thoughtless ignorance, unseeing prejudice, natural selfishness. The world no longer burns at the stake those who profess allegiance to Jesus, but it has subtler and even more effective punishments for those who attempt to embody his ideals in social organization. It is the path Jesus trod, a course which, "like a ray of dawn, shines on and on to the full light of day." \*

\* Proverbs 4:18. James Moffatt, *The Bible, a New Translation*.

## XI

### THE NEW INTERNATIONALISM

BEN M. CHERRINGTON

IN the issue of the *New York Times* of January 3, 1932, is reported the radio address of a well-known American in which recent administrations are severely criticized for leading our country into European entanglements. "It is about time," the speaker is quoted as saying, "that the American people got back on the high road of Americanism." "Do not allow the international bankers and the other big influences that have gambled with your prosperity to gamble with your politics. Unless we American citizens are willing to go on laboring indefinitely merely to provide loot for Europe, we shall personally see to it that a man is elected to the Presidency this year whose guiding motto is 'America First.'"

In the same issue of the *Times* a distinguished citizen of another country is quoted as follows: "The more I have traveled myself the more convinced I have become that travel is essential to a better understanding between nations and to the realization in the world today that the welfare of one country is bound up with that of all others."

The supreme issue confronting the world could not be more sharply defined than in the clash of these two points of view. The first speaker believes that national isolation is still feasible, and the second contends that the day of isolation has departed. Both speakers cannot be right. If it be true that "the welfare of one country is bound up with that of all others," then obviously the counsel, "America First," is a counsel of folly. This chapter

is written in the belief that it is a counsel of folly; that the interdependence of peoples no longer is a subject for debate, but an established, incontrovertible fact.

One wonders that the first speaker does not sense the irony in the fact that the very instrument employed to disseminate his doctrine of isolation itself is making mockery of his words. International broadcasts steadily multiply and rapidly the radio is rendering isolation an obsolete term. Authorities announce that the day is just around the corner when its colleague, television, will be made available throughout the world.

Add to the radio the cinema, the press, and other facilities for communication and we have an irresistible combination, all conspiring to make the mode of life and conveniences of a given people a matter of common knowledge to all other peoples. This broadening knowledge of the ways of others intrigues the desire both to share one's own possessions and to acquire those things most appealing from among the possessions of others. Out of this tendency, which presumably springs from the dynamics of life itself, there develops an ever-increasing, ever more complicated international exchange of commodities and services. As well show children toys in the windows and then dispense with Christmas as to expose the wares of the world and expect nations not to exchange them.

In pure theory it is conceivable that some nations might dwell in isolation. In theory, America, for instance, might draw within her borders and her people live with a fair degree of comfort. Many conveniences which now are common property probably would disappear. It might mean, for example, the substitution of iron-rimmed wheels for rubber-tired automobiles and parched corn for coffee, but there is no inherent reason why eventually we could not be a healthy and contented race. That is, provided we could be kept in ignorance of what was going on in other lands, which naturally would require a strict censorship of every form of international communication. For once our people discovered that others were riding on pneumatic tires while we bumped along on iron rims, or should someone boot-

leg in genuine coffee, there would be a great to-do. These having been seen and tasted, desires would arise, whose urgency would only be strengthened by the prohibitions upon the coveted luxuries. Under such circumstances the government's watchword necessarily must be, "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," and its every energy bent to keep the people blissfully unaware of the outer world. China followed this prescription for centuries with a fair measure of success. Theoretically it could be done.

However, it would be idle to continue further with such nonsense. Obviously neither America, nor any other nation in this machine age, is going to turn back the hands of the clock in such fashion. Even China has resolutely faced away from the policy of aloofness. The fact of the matter is that by its amazing developments in means of communication and transportation, science has interwoven the affairs of men in one vast complex of interdependencies. The interpenetration of the financial and commercial structures of the world surely must be self-evident, viewed in the light of the present world depression. In short, the world society has arrived and all nations are inescapably a part of it. Throughout the ages, doubtless it has been true that spiritually we are members one of another, but now for the first time in history it is true, literally, physically. To the ancient question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" today science emphatically replies in the affirmative.

As a matter of fact the world community had become a reality by 1914, but few there were who grasped its significance. The thing had happened with such incredible swiftness that the world's thinking lagged far behind. August, 1914, then found a world community controlled not by order and system but in the main by anarchy. Nations stalked the earth under the delusion that they were yet enjoying unabridged sovereignty; the titanic collision of 1914 to 1918 was the inevitable result.

Despite this terrible lesson multitudes of people in all lands have yet to grasp these essential facts. The quotation with which this chapter started was given not because it represents

an extreme position, but because it is typical of remarks that may be heard any day anywhere in America.

The task, then, confronting the world is a twofold one: first, to make people aware of the realities of the day in which they live; and, second, to create the basic institutions through which the life of the new world society may express itself in an efficient and peaceful manner. In a word, it is the enterprise of civilizing world society.

Lord Lothian of England has suggested that there are four basic steps involved in the civilizing of any community. First, machinery must be created to perform what may be called the legislative function; second, courts must be established for the settlement of disputes between citizens by process of reason rather than by force; third, violence as a method of settling disputes is then outlawed; fourth, the weapons of violence are finally eliminated.

It is interesting to note how precisely this formula coincides with the evolution of communities in western America from the period of the wide open frontier days down to orderly modern cities. The pioneer stage was characterized in a measure by anarchy; each man was a law unto himself; each carried a gun and stood ready to shoot in defense of his rights. Later, as the population increased came a discovery of fundamental importance. Men learned that they had many things in common and that larger satisfactions were to be had by curtailing their individual impulses in favor of these common concerns. That is, they discovered a community of interests and out of that discovery emerged the four developments suggested by Lord Lothian. To supply the need for legislative machinery through which common rules of procedure and conduct could be established, they created town councils.

Second, courts were set up for the judicial settlement of disputes among citizens. Third, shooting, or violence as a method of settling quarrels, was made a crime, and fourth, it became unlawful to carry arms. Resting upon these four developments as a sure foundation many other institutions have been erected

to meet the growing functional needs of the community; thus, for example, the Chamber of Commerce, the Bar Association, the Medical Association, the Federation of Labor, the Council of Churches, and scores of others.

The same four steps can be traced in the early development of our federal government. For several years immediately following the Revolutionary War the colonies were dominated by jealousy of their independence. Each insisted upon having its own way in all things with the result that all suffered. In time they made precisely the same discovery that came to western communities at a later period; they perceived their community of interests. Out of that revelation came the constitution. And then followed the familiar four developments: Congress representing the legislative machinery; the Supreme Court, the judiciary; war between States was ruled out and states disarmed to the level of a police force.

So universal has become the consciousness of community interests that although the spirit of state loyalty is strong, today no state would seriously consider breaking the peace of the Union in defense of what it considered to be its rights. At the moment the state of Arizona, which is in serious disagreement with other western states over the distribution of the waters of the Colorado River, has submitted the issue to the United States Supreme Court. Although the people of Arizona are convinced as to the justice of their case, and feeling is running high, that person would be considered a subject for institutional care who would suggest that Arizona declare war against her neighbors should the Supreme Court decide against her.

Notice then that the peace and coöperation characterising the relations of the forty-eight states of the Union derive both from a universal appreciation of the many interests which are common to all and from a confidence that the institutions which we have described, in the long run guarantee a surer measure of justice and freedom than could be obtained by any other device.

It is to this identical position that the nations constituting the world society must be brought, but it would not be far from the

truth to say that at the moment they probably are nearer to the original position of the thirteen colonies. Notwithstanding the progress that has been made in recent years, to which we will allude in a moment, they have yet to learn the transcendent importance of the interests which all nations share together as members of one community. It is the feebleness of this sense of mutual purpose and objectives which constitutes the weakest point in the movement to civilize our world order.

Just as individuals in growing frontier communities, through painful experience learned the paradox that by over-insistence upon rights and liberties they lost them, and that by curtailing their independence in coöperative activities for common ends a larger freedom was gained; just as the American States with their diverse populations, resources and interests, have discovered that consideration for the interests of the Federation of States results in the greatest good to the individual state; even so must nations learn that in the long run they have much to gain and little to lose through whole-hearted participation in the organization of an orderly world.

At present aggressive and shortsighted nationalism for vast numbers of people has become a religion. Its astigmatism leads it much of the time to work against its own self-interest. The decree of the United States Senate that even though it may cause debtor nations to default, there shall be no further consideration of debt reduction, is a case in point. Obviously, if conference could salvage only twenty-five cents on the dollar the American taxpayer would be better off with that than to assume the entire obligation himself. Such is the type of irrational, highly emotionalized nationalism regnant throughout the world today. To dissipate its emotionalism in the interests of sane and reasoned action is an undertaking calling in unlimited degree for tolerance, patience, and understanding. Unfortunately many even of those enlisted on the side of the new internationalism are lacking in understanding. All too few are the number who fully grasp the reasons lying back of extreme and seemingly futile nationalist programs. Yet without

such understanding, efforts to effect changes in policy are destined to be fruitless. Frank H. Simonds, in commenting upon the failure of the Americans and English to comprehend the causes of the post-war conflicting territorial aspirations of European countries, has this to say:

"Since they were unable to understand the issues involved or the passion aroused by these territorial disputes, the Anglo-Saxon peoples easily and simply classified the new quarrels with the old. They discovered in both proof of the existence amongst the European peoples of ambitions, passions, and emotions, which had no counterpart in their own lives. . . . And the conviction took root that at heart all European peoples hid beneath an outward pretense of devotion to peace an instinctive fondness for war. At bottom this interpretation, at once cruel and unjust, had its origin in the fact that for both the British and the American peoples, the territorial issues seem only territorial; were for them no more than incredible quarrels over relatively insignificant parcels of real estate. But, in point of fact, for the peoples actually in controversy, the issue was always primarily one of human beings, and not of land. Thus, for the Poles and Germans, the question of the Polish Corridor is above and beyond all else an issue which involves the fate of hundreds of thousands of men and women dwelling in and about the contested area, who belong to their race, speak their tongue and claim their protection. For the Anglo-Saxons, on the contrary, the Polish Corridor has no meaning. At most it is only a splash of color on the map of Europe. . . . That two peoples, presumably civilized, should be willing in order to hold or regain this land, to risk a war fraught with disaster for the contestants and ruin for the Continent, seems proof of the utter madness of Polish and German nationalism alike. Almost never do British or American critics of German and Polish policies, in respect to the Corridor, attempt to translate these European issues into the political circumstances of their own lives. Thus Americans who in the name of world peace unhesitatingly demand German or Polish sacrifice in the matter of the Corridor, would be astounded at the mere suggestion that the United States should cede New England to Canada or California to Mexico. Yet the sacrifice would not be disproportionate to that which they require of the Continental peoples." <sup>1</sup>

He might have added that of the many Americans who con-

<sup>1</sup> Frank H. Simonds, *Can Europe Keep the Peace?* Pg. 48-50, Harper & Bros.



demned Japan's plea that her intervention in Manchuria in 1931 was to preserve law and order and to protect life and property, surely not all of them would so readily denounce America's interventionist practice in the Caribbean. Or, to reverse the situation, it probably would be equally true that many Japanese who condone the Manchurian intervention as necessary would be severely critical of the presence of American Marines in Nicaragua.

Nevertheless, in spite of these many limitations, in the years since the close of the World War there have been substantial accomplishments in the effort to organize world life. In each of the four fundamental developments essential to a well regulated community there have been encouraging beginnings.

In the League system is seen the broad outline of legislative machinery for world society. While far from perfect and laboring under the handicap of the absence from its membership of two powerful nations, nevertheless its technique is improving and its effectiveness growing year by year. The confusion surrounding the League Council's efforts to settle the Manchurian issue has not yet cleared, so that it is difficult to interpret that experience. It seems certain, however, that not one of the world powers was willing to make any considerable sacrifice either to save the League's prestige or to enforce peace. To many League friends this revelation has brought bitter disappointment. The adoption of the "Lytton Report" condemning the action of the Japanese militarists, finally forced by the determined insistence of the smaller nations, aided by the increasing truculence of the military party in Japan, has given new courage and hope to those who have wanted to believe that the League of Nations offered a significant step toward effective world organization. It is too early, as yet, to prophesy what the ultimate outcome of the open break between the League and Japan will be. However, should later developments indicate that the Manchurian crisis struck a death blow to a League resting on military sanctions—a League which in the final extremity would employ collective violence to crush violence—

then well may that crisis be regarded as a blessing in disguise. For not only is the idea of military sanctions impractical on the score that put to the test nations would refuse to respond, it is highly illogical; the cure would be worse than the disease; it would but serve to multiply and scatter the germs of war throughout the world. Furthermore the idea can find no justification in Christian ethics. To premeditate the fighting of hatred with collective hatred, and slaughter with coöperative slaughter, surely is an enterprise entirely foreign to the purposes of the Christian Church.

If as a result of this temporary defeat the League finds itself on that highway of international coöperation whose sanctions are moral and political, then indeed will it have been a fortunate defeat, for that is a highway over which eventually all nations will be willing to travel. Functioning in this capacity the League may well become the supreme agency for developing the type of international morality which the world so definitely needs and without which no amount of international machinery, no matter how well conceived, will permanently survive.

When the World Court came into existence the second provision for ordering community life was taken. Rapidly the Court is winning the respect and support of thoughtful citizens everywhere, but it also is handicapped by the absence of Russia and the United States. August, 1928, marked the third development, for at that time, through the Pact of Paris nations agreed to outlaw violence as a method of settling disputes among themselves. Although still regarded by some as an "idle gesture," public opinion gradually is mobilizing in support of the Pact as the Supreme Law of the World Society. While this is being written, the nations are gathering at Geneva to consider the fourth step as represented in the first World's Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments. A realistic view would support the expectation that disarmament will be a slow process, for although no nation desires war, all desire security, and until confidence in the efficacy of the machinery of peace has grown much stronger than

it is at present, nations will tend to cling to their arms for protection.

Repeating the history of communities and states, the world must now consolidate these four developments and upon them rear and coördinate an illimitable number of agencies and institutions, international in character, to facilitate the interplay of humanity's diverse interests and needs.

In conclusion let us turn more specifically to the Church's part in this great enterprise.

At once it is evident that this task assumes priority over all others. In a very real sense the many other important undertakings to which the Church is committed are subsidiary to this one all-embracing problem. Should victory ultimately be won for the machinery and the mind of peace in world society, then will the Church have opportunity for achieving her purposes in these many endeavors. But should international war again envelop the world, its possible consequences are beyond the power of human intelligence to foresee. Many there are among thoughtful students who are convinced that such a catastrophe would fatally undermine the Church's foundation and cause the evening shadows to descend upon the remains of our western culture.

Every resource of the Church, therefore, must be mobilized: her facilities for preaching, for teaching, and for publication must be focused upon the development of an intelligent world citizenship; all of her strength and influence must be marshalled on behalf of the institutions of peace. She must not hesitate to join forces with all men and movements working for the desired ends or moving in the right direction. Many of these will be motivated by selfish considerations, concerned primarily for their own interests or the interests of their particular group. But so long as they are standing strongly for a world of peace and order she must maintain her coöperation with them. This is not to suggest that she should abate her message of Christian brotherhood. On the contrary the Church should utilize every means at her command to proclaim her con-

viction that the attainment of peace among mankind is implicit in Christianity and therefore obligatory upon all its followers.

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that only a fraction of the human race are followers of Christianity and that to rely solely upon the Christian motive of brotherhood for the realization of an international organization and an international mind adequate permanently to forestall war, would be to court disaster. The number in the world who are ready to respond to that high appeal is quite inadequate to effect the indispensable change.

Fortunately this is one of the situations in which the self-interest of individuals and nations, if properly informed, will lead to ends consonant with the dictates of Christian ethics. Shrewd, informed common sense should prompt every intelligent individual to work for the goals that the Church, motivated by more idealistic considerations, is seeking to attain. The realization of this fact mitigates somewhat the otherwise appalling difficulty of the task.

As a matter of fact such team work between idealism and enlightened self-interest is operating in all political units that have been brought under the sway of law and order. Recently in a modern city which seventy-five years ago was a frontier town, the studio of an artist, who is my intimate friend, caught fire. I found myself joining with firemen and neighbors to fight the flames and to rescue as many as possible of his art treasures. Only after great exertion was the fire checked and the studio saved. Reflecting upon this experience I observe that there were three groups of us working for a common end, but with quite different motives. The firemen fought the flames because it was their professional duty to do so. The community had delegated that responsibility to them and it was all in the day's work so far as they were concerned.

The neighbors (who did not know my friend who had recently moved into the studio) were motivated in part probably by a sense of civic duty, but more especially to save their own dwellings which were very close to the studio. While I was

driven by a compelling desire to save my friend as far as possible from the poignant suffering that must accompany the destruction of his works of art, some of which represented years of labor.

Here we have three motives—duty, self-interest, love—driving three groups of people in coördinated effort to achieve a common purpose. In similar fashion we must unite the peoples of the world to prevent the recurrence of a world conflagration such as that of 1914. In that great effort, if we are successful, we shall see, working side by side, government officials, who seek world peace and order because they have been mandated to do so and as a matter of duty; citizens, motivated by considerations of safety for their own possessions and security for their race or nation, and who, though they bear no particular love toward other peoples, yet realize that their own security is bound up with the security of others; and, finally, those who look upon the world with love for all men and who strive that brotherhood and good-will may reign throughout the earth.

No one of these motives alone has the power to drive the world to the desired goal, nor have all three operating separately. But when the three unite for a common purpose and destination, then may the world with reasonable assurance anticipate the eventual triumph of the New Internationalism.

## XII

### THE CONTEMPORARY NOTE IN THEOLOGY

EDWIN LEWIS

#### I

The glory of Christian theology in the past has been in its great systems. The modern disposition to disparage these systems, and to be sceptical of their having any permanent value, reveals a lamentable lack of intelligent appreciation. Such men as Origen, Augustine, John of Damascus, Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, Melancthon, Calvin, Edwards, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and Dörner, are recognized as among the world's greatest intellects, and all of them gave their allegiance to the Christian faith. These men constructed systems of theology as others built cathedrals, and they worked from the same motive—the glory of God. It is true that they took much of their material for granted, and that they failed to bring their heritage to any large extent under the scrutiny of the critical faculty. But in this regard they were but the children of their age. The suspicion of authority, especially as enshrined in tradition, is to any considerable degree of comparatively recent origin. Uniformity of thinking was for many centuries supposed to be necessary not only to the security of the church but also to the well-being of society, and theological innovation therefore received small encouragement. Such books as Lewis Browne's *Since Calvary* violate every canon of historical perspective. Men are condemned for not seeing what in the given circumstances of their time it was impossible for them to have seen. Historical criticism is, of course, justifiable enough, but

less for the purpose of roundly condemning the past than for the purpose of endeavoring to avoid its mistakes on our own part today. It is easy enough to make merry over the theological controversies of the first thousand years of Christian history, and ask sententiously how men could find vital issues in such obvious inanities as then attracted them. Nestorianism and Sabelianism and Arianism, Montanism and Donatism and Arianism, Monothelitism and Monophysitism, and so on and so on—what have we here but words, word, words? It is all so much "sound and fury, signifying nothing." Were not those men crushed in every case who presumed to depart from already established modes of thinking and acting? Is not the history of theological controversy the history of the triumph of authority? Perhaps so, we must answer the unsympathetic questioner, but when all the facts are considered, it is difficult to see that events could have followed a much different course from the one they took. Anyone who knows, for example, the history of the Transubstantiation controversy in the ninth century knows that the result was practically a foregone conclusion. Paschasius Radbert and those who thought with him were simply stating philosophical grounds, borrowed from current modes of thought, for a belief which was already well-established in the mind of the church—the belief in the "Real Presence" of Christ in the Eucharist. Ratramnus and the other opponents of Radbert are to be commended for their courage and independence, but they were leaders of a forlorn hope.<sup>1</sup> And if anyone says that nothing of importance came out of the agitation, let him consider what place the doctrine of the mass has had in Christendom since! An increasing number of men came to believe—whether rightly or wrongly—that the doctrine of the Real Presence fitted into the total conception of Christianity as this was gradually clarifying itself. The passion for systematized thinking did the rest.

There is therefore an element of what might be called historical necessity in the theological thought of the past. Theo-

<sup>1</sup> See Hagenbach, *History of Doctrines*, vol. II, pg. 89-102.

logians belonged to their age as much as did anyone else. Prevailing culture supplied the "patterns" of thought, and theology made use of them. To expect twentieth century theological thinking in the fifth or ninth or thirteen century would be as unreasonable as it would be to expect in those same periods twentieth century thinking in politics or in medicine or in science. Christian thinkers found themselves in possession of a body of accepted belief. They conceived their task to be not to investigate this belief to see whether or not it were true, but to accept it as true on the authority of God himself, and to present it accordingly to others. Because it was God's own truth, there was nothing else that could contradict it. Indeed, so far from contradicting it, all other truth did but serve to illustrate and confirm it. That there was a certain arbitrariness about all this is manifest. What did not agree with the accepted truth was to be rejected. It is often claimed that this is evidence that Christian theologians were suspicious of reason. They depended on "revelation" and "tradition" and "authority." That there was this dependence has already been admitted, but he makes a great mistake who supposes that these men were lacking in intellectual power, or that they had no intellectual curiosity, or that they never looked beyond the confines of accepted Christian thought.\* The fact that they were, many of them, "system-builders," is proof of the wideness of their intellectual interest, since it is impossible to construct a Christian theological system without incorporating in the system elements that lie outside the circle of distinctly Christian ideas. We are justified in saying that on the whole the history of theology is the history of a persisting core of experiential truth whose movement across the ages was characterized at once by a process of assimilation of what seemed to be helpful in the new and a surrender of what in the old had seemed to outlive its usefulness.

## II

The New Testament itself justifies this method as it has been followed by theological thought through the centuries. For

\* See Etienne Gilson, *Études de Philosophie Médiévale*, chap. I.



a collection of writings dedicated to a common purpose, the New Testament displays a most amazing diversity. Every writer writes in his own way, and reveals the culture that helped to produce him.\* The difference between the Jesus of Luke and the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel is the difference between the situation, culture, point of view, and purpose of two different writers. Looked at from a certain point of view, Jesus was himself a theologian, and while he proclaimed a message which had features entirely new, in the form which he gave to it his message reveals the backgrounds out of which he came. Such terms as "Son of Man," "Kingdom of God," "Kingdom of Heaven," "the Day of the Lord," and others that were frequently on his lips, were not original with him: they were terms common in the literature of the people whom he addressed. When Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle, he did not leave behind him all his heritage of culture and education, and begin absolutely *de novo* to state the fundamental Christian ideas and facts as he understood them. There are passages in Romans and Galatians that are expressed in language that is obviously the result of Rabbinic influences upon Paul's mind, and are designed to appeal in particular to those whose ideal of religion is still the ritualistic and the formal. So, too, there are passages in Colossians and Ephesians which betoken Paul's familiarity with Hellenistic modes of thought, and these modes he uses skilfully to combat Gnostic perversions of Christianity and at the same time to present persuasively the idea of the complete supremacy of Jesus Christ in both things in heaven and things on the earth. It is impossible to understand the Fourth Gospel, especially the Prologue, apart from some knowledge of the Alexandrian philosophy as this was set forth by Philo Judæus; and the wisdom of the approach is apparent when we remember that the Fourth Gospel originated at the close of the first century in the region of Ephesus, where Alexandrianism was influential, and was intended, as B. W. Bacon has recently expressed it, to show "what it entered into the heart of man to conceive" concerning the meaning of the Gospel for such a

\* See E. F. Scott, *The Gospel and Its Tributaries*.

situation as that.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the purest piece of apologetic writing in the New Testament is the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is perfectly clear that the writer is under the influence of both Hellenistic and Judaistic modes of thought and speech, and that it is his purpose to use them as instruments for conveying to others his conception of Christianity. No book has suffered more at the hands of the uninstructed than the Revelation of John, so much so that many now pass it by as being little more than an unintelligible fantasy. Yet rightly understood, the book is an example of theological method that must remain a classic until the end of time. Here was a man possessed of an opulent imagination, familiar with the abundant descriptive literature of the time, confronted with a world situation which he interpreted as typical of future situations, believing himself to have in his understanding of Jesus Christ a clue to the unfolding purpose of God, and in the application of his clue laying under tribute all his own rich gifts of heart and mind. Carrington hardly exaggerates when he describes the result as "the only masterpiece of pure art in the New Testament."<sup>5</sup> Compared with, say, Romans or Galatians, the Revelation of John is a piece of theological reconstruction. It is still the theology of a great deliverance, but it moves along not under the drive of an impassioned logic but to the rhythmic beat of majestic music. John's theology is expressed differently from Paul's, because Paul is Paul and John is John.

### III

Any fair appraisal, we have already said, will admit that historical theology has continually illustrated this reciprocal relation, apparent even in the New Testament, which obtains between a thinking man and his time. Most of the great theologians of the early church were of gentile extraction. They had been trained in the schools of the day, and they knew the language of culture. Loyal though they strove to be to the

<sup>4</sup> *Jesus, Son of God*, Lect. IV.

<sup>5</sup> *The Meaning of the Revelation*. Pg. xvii.

Christian tradition, the oral as well as the written, when they confronted their non-Christian opponents, or when they met together in controversy, or when they sought to build up their weaker fellow-believers, they made the largest possible use of their intellectual resources. Indeed, as is well known, so competent a historian as Harnack declared that they went altogether too far in this regard, and changed the simple gospel of reconciliation into a ponderous philosophical *Weltanschauung*—"world-view"—even although he admits that there was a certain historical justification for the change.<sup>6</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter may be, it remains that the theologians of the period were alive to the age in which they lived. To appreciate the theology we have therefore to understand the age. The epochal phrase, first used by Tertullian, *una substantia, tres personae* ("one substance, three persons"), is a remarkable illustration of the theological use of terms originally employed for quite different purposes.<sup>7</sup> Men later quarreled over these and like terms, mistaking them for the essence of the faith itself, and quite overlooking the fact that what was significant was not the terms *per se*, but what they were *aimed at*. Reference was made above to the Transubstantiation controversy of the ninth century. Radbert's tract on the question, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, owes everything to the distinction, borrowed from the accepted Aristotelian logic of the schools, between a "substance" and its "accidents." In the Eucharist, so the argument went, the substance of bread and wine was replaced by the substance of flesh and blood, while yet the accidents of bread and wine still remained. The merits of the distinction are not now being argued: all that is being contended is that men were seeking in contemporary thought for new ways of making intelligible an accepted Christian belief. Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo?* marked a distinct departure from traditional modes of explaining the process of the atonement,

<sup>6</sup> *History of Dogma*, vol. II, chap. VI; cf. *What Is Christianity?* Lects. XI, XII.

<sup>7</sup> See B. B. Warfield, *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine*. Pg. 38ff.

and in its large use of the concept of "satisfaction" it drew freely on the prevailing feudalistic structure of society; just as, at a later date, Hugo Grotius borrowed from legal practice the idea of "acceptable substitute" as explaining the process in a more helpful way. Indeed, as Shailer Mathews has recently shown, there is no Christian doctrine whose history is more sensitive to changing thought in other fields than the doctrine of the atonement, and this fact alone is sufficient to relieve theology from the charge of being exclusively traditional.<sup>8</sup> There has been an abundance of theological innovation, from Paul down,—in Paul, when he saw the Gospel as universal and not Judaistic: in Cyprian, when he found authority not merely in apostolic tradition but in the bishops as the successors of the apostles: in Augustine, when he conceived the Roman empire as a divinely intended adumbration of the church as the City of God on the earth: in Anselm, when he repudiated the idea that Christ in his death paid a ransom price to Satan: in Aquinas, when he laid hold upon a newly acquired Aristotle, in spite of an earlier Papal suspicion, and achieved the greatest philosophico-theological synthesis of Christian history: and in Schleiermacher, when he dared to borrow certain conceptions from the excommunicated Jewish pantheist Spinoza, and from the much-suspected contemporary Romanticists, and to lay them captive at the feet of his Lord.

This *apologia* for historical theology may seem unnecessarily long, but it could well have been longer when one remembers how general is the opinion that theology has always travelled with its face to the rear, utterly oblivious of the pulsating life around it, concerned only to maintain a traditional *status quo*. Before we judge the past by the present, we must first see the past in its own light. Men could not use non-existent categories! If pre-Darwinian theology is to be condemned just for being pre-Darwinian, what shall be done to pre-Darwinian science? To estimate any man aright, we must "sit where he sat," put ourselves imaginatively under the control of his idols—as

<sup>8</sup> *The Atonement and the Social Process.*

Bacon called them—idols of the tribe, of language, of tradition, of the den, and see him not as an isolated individual but as a part of a larger whole, more or less dominated by the *Zeitgeist*, a voice in which are heard the accents of others besides his own.

## IV

Indiscriminate praise, however, would be no more defensible than indiscriminate blame. Grateful recognition of the contemporaneity of historical theology is not incompatible with regret that all too often the opportunity of theology to re-invigorate itself by entering into a closer alliance with its time went by unheeded. If such books as that of J. W. Draper, *The Conflict Between Religion and Science*, and that of A. D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, err on the side of severity because the authors make an expectation of historical theology which would at once be seen to be unreasonable if it were made of any other subject, even in a much more reasonable book like J. Y. Simpson's *Landmarks in the Struggle Between Science and Religion*, enough is revealed to make one wonder that men charged with the interests of the Kingdom of God could be so blind. Bondage to the letter of Scripture, the claim of inerrancy or infallibility on the part of the Roman Church, and the transfer by a later Protestantism of this infallibility from the church to Scripture—these are the chief causes, says Simpson,\* of the inability of historical theology to take full advantage of its opportunities, and he speaks with some feeling of the "debasement and degrading hold of Latin Christianity upon Europe from the sixth to the sixteenth century," and the way in which it continually compelled the subordination of the spirit of free enquiry to the alleged necessities of a powerful ecclesiasticism.

Yet it is still fair to ask whether the true spirit of theology is not reflected in the few who walk ahead rather than in the many who lag behind. Roger Bacon was a scientist and a

\* Pages 136-141.

theologian both. The theologians of his day imprisoned him, but did they not, after all, imprison a theologian, and shall we not rather judge theology by the fearlessness of Roger Bacon than by the trepidation of his theological enemies? Bernard of Clairvaux, warm of heart, hounded to his death Abelard of the bold mind—theologians both: but if theology is to be charged with the victor, why not also give it credit for the victim? Calvinistic theology clashed in Scotland a hundred years ago around McLeod Campbell, and Campbell was driven from the Church.<sup>10</sup> Theology did that, it is said. True enough, but did not Campbell resist the old theology in the name of one he conceived to be better? If theology is to be blamed for Campbell's enemies, at least let it have the benefit also of Campbell himself and of his belated but wholehearted re-instatement. In that same Scotland fifty years ago, W. Robertson Smith was removed from the chair of Old Testament at Aberdeen. The attack upon him was led by Robert Rainy, a theological scholar of note, described, indeed, by Gladstone, as "the greatest of living Scotsmen."<sup>11</sup> But if Rainy, acting under the deepest and sincerest of convictions respecting the nature of Scripture, was impelled to treat Smith as he did, it is still true that Smith also was a theologian. It is also true that the very church that deposed him accepts to-day without question his general attitude to the Old Testament, just as it accepts in large part the theological emphases of McLeod Campbell which at one time threatened to divide it. Much has been made of the opposition within the church to the results of Biblical criticism, but who was it that achieved these results if not men who were themselves within the church, nourished by its ministrations, taught in its schools, and themselves in turn its honored teachers. The long roll of names called in such a book as Schweitzer's *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*—from Reimarus to Wrede—are in almost every case the names of men who did their work

<sup>10</sup> See Article on "McLeod Campbell," by J. H. Leckie, in *Expository Times*. February, 1929.

<sup>11</sup> See Black and Crystal, *William Robertson*, especially chaps. IX, X.

under the auspices of the church. Let it be admitted that they were vehemently opposed in the name of a traditional theology, but why may we not call their work itself theological—the kind of work at least which later was to force a theological reconstruction? In any event, theology to-day works hand in hand with the most exacting Biblical scholarship. It remains for the most part undisturbed by any new suggestions as to the origin, date, authorship, or structure of this or that book, whether of the Old Testament or of the New. It can do that because it sees in Scripture the record of a progressive experience of God on the part of man, self-verifying in its higher ranges, and capable of continuing that verification just as long as the human heart “needs must love the highest when it sees it.”<sup>12</sup> In a man like Canon Streeter, as in the late A. S. Peake, we have one of the finest of contemporary illustrations of the whole-hearted acceptance of the right of scholarship to investigate the nature of Scripture, combined with the utmost loyalty to that ideal of life and experience to which it is the function of Scripture to bear witness.<sup>13</sup> If you want one of the most valuable pieces of recent New Testament criticism you turn to Streeter’s *The Four Gospels*, and if you want one of the most notable pieces of recent Christian theology you turn to the same writer’s *Reality*.

## V

The situation is much the same in respect of the relations of theology with natural science. A heliocentric universe seemed to challenge the very existence of the God of the Christian tradition, but of those who believe in God at all there are few to-day who do not recognize that every new insight into the workings of nature is but a new revelation of the being of nature’s God. It was only natural that a theology which had inherited the Genesis cosmogony, and which had been led by centuries of sacred tradition to regard that cosmogony as a direct

<sup>12</sup> Cf. C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, chaps. XIII, XIV.

<sup>13</sup> See A. S. Peake, *Samuel Peake*, chap. VII.

divine revelation, should have been slow to adjust itself to the new view of things. How impossible it was for some men to relinquish the tradition is set forth dramatically enough in Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son*. What is significant is that the adjustment was finally made, and made to the advantage of the cause which theology represents—the cause of God, his nature, his method, his purpose. Let anyone compare the discussion of the subject, "God and the World," in the theologies of a hundred years ago, say Watson's *Theological Institutes*, with the discussion of the same subject in the theologies of to-day, say Th. Haering's *The Christian Faith*, or W. E. Hocking's *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, or John Baillie's *The Interpretation of Religion*, or George Galloway's *Philosophy of Religion*, and he will see that the theology of recent decades has been true to the historical principle of assimilation and surrender—it has given up and it has taken on. If there was a somewhat prolonged suspicion of the idea of evolution, that was hardly to be wondered at in the circumstances. The proponents of the idea were for the most part not actively identified with the church as were the proponents of biblical criticism, and in the name of the new idea they made claims as to the passing of religion and the final "bowing of God over the frontier" which, to say the least, were rash. Religious men for years believed they were fighting for all that was precious in resisting the idea and its alleged implications. Now that the tumult and the shouting have ceased, we can afford to be indulgent, while yet rejoicing that the victory was won—won as much for theology as for science. For if science vindicated its right to follow whither the argument led, theology also vindicated its ability to utilize the new truth and give it an interpretation which was the more reasonable according as it was uncompromisingly theistic. Non-theistic evolution simply cannot be made intelligible, since it sees in the nature-process a continual increase, a coming of higher values, an emergence of what is admittedly of greater worth than what went before, while yet it endeavors to explain the more by the less, the



higher by the lower.<sup>14</sup> It denies God, and then supposes that what there could not be a God to do is done by something described variously as "law," "method," "process," "time," and the like. Science, therefore, in one of its most characteristic modern hypotheses, needs the help of theology in order to fit the hypothesis into a defensible world-view. In its turn, the hypothesis has contributed to the range and impressiveness of theology. The God who is manifested in all the intricate processes of the universe as these are known to modern science, is a God of whom theology can say with more truth even than of old, "The firmament showeth his handiwork." For that reason, the most astonishing announcements of an Einstein, an Eddington, or a Jeans, do but serve to thrust out the horizons of the well-grounded Christian thinker rather than to throw him into confusion. He knows that religious faith, founded in the imperishable needs of men and in their deepest and most satisfying experience, can find in science its helpful minister. For evidence, he can point to such books as Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, and Driesch, *Man and the Universe*, and MacFie, *Science Rediscovered God*, and Joseph Needham, *The Sceptical Biologist*, and the Symposium on *Science, Religion, and Reality*. Theology has listened to natural science, and has profited by the listening.

## VI

Can as much be said for theology and the new social idealism? Whatever the reason for it may be, it is historically true that the rise of capitalism and the industrialization of the West synchronized with the growth of Protestantism. Scholars divide on the question as to whether there is a causal connection here.<sup>15</sup> Whether there is or not, it remains that the religious world at the close of the eighteenth century was strangely indifferent to the social injustices which were everywhere rampant. Even when we allow all possible credit to the work of Wesley and

<sup>14</sup> Cf. E. Lewis, *God and Ourselves*, chap. VII.

<sup>15</sup> See Georgia Harkness, *The Ethics of Calvinism*.

John Howard and Wilberforce, it still has to be admitted that socialism was born outside of the churches, and had small reason to hope for any encouragement from organized religion. In so far as Comte, in his new emphasis on social relationships, made any place at all for religion, it was "a religion of humanity," and it still remained that in the bizarre form he gave it after his emotional upheaval. The socialistic movement led by Robert Owen (1816) in England, and later introduced by him into America, was in general regarded as hostile to religion because it proposed a totally new industrial order which dispensed with the principle of profit-making. The treatment he received eventually led Owen to issue a "Denunciation of all Religions," although, as Binyon points out in *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*,<sup>16</sup> Owenism was largely Christian both in its tone and in its idealism, and what Owen really denounced was not religion *per se*, but "all the systems of theology that he knew of." As Binyon further says, the question at issue was whether there was to be a revolution that would leave God out entirely, or whether men would arise who would come to a truer appreciation of the Christian revelation in its implications for social life and would work out a theology which, though its head would still be above the clouds, would have its feet securely on the earth. That was a hundred years ago, and although men so influential otherwise in organized Christianity as Coleridge and Kingsley and Julius Hare and F. D. Maurice, and later Robertson and Westcott, proclaimed the cause of a "Christian Socialism," it was not until near the close of the nineteenth century that theology began in any large way to make use of the new social concepts.<sup>17</sup> It is a curious fact that theology responded more quickly and more generally to Biblical criticism and to natural science than it did to social idealism, although the major emphases of the New Testament were all such as to fit with an astonishing precision into the new view of individual-social

<sup>16</sup> Pg. 38, 39.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hugh Martin, *Christian Social Reformers of the Nineteenth Century*, especially the introduction by William Temple.

relationships. The sad truth is that the theologians, like the churches they served, were too closely articulated with the existing order to want to see it disturbed. It was one thing to accept a new theory of the composition of the Pentateuch, or to substitute the conception of creation by divine fiat with the conception of creation by a divine process continually operative: that made little difference in the practical ordering of life. But it was another thing to admit that organized religion was countenancing a condition of things that was a flat denial of practically everything that Jesus ever said. In condemning his society the theologian was condemning himself, and a man must be deeply convinced before he goes that far. It is possible to be a mere theorist respecting the implications of Biblical criticism and of natural science, but not as respects admitted wrongs in the social order. He who admits such wrongs is under obligation to do something about them.<sup>18</sup> Any criticism of the existing order lays a burden upon the critic: at least, it does if his criticism is sincere. These considerations do not justify theological backwardness in the presence of the rising social idealism of the last century, but they do help to explain it.

And eventually theology responded. Sir James Seeley published *Ecce Homo* in 1865, and faced the orthodoxy of the time with a Jesus who was interested in the well-being of men here and now. Ritschl in Germany worked out an imposing theological reconstruction based on the claim that the kingdom concept was normative for every great Christian doctrine, and the influence of the Ritschlian theology spread over Western Christendom. In so solid and conservative a Lectureship as the Bampton, W. H. Freemantle in 1883 dealt with *The World as the Subject of Redemption*, and the lecturer announced his thesis as follows: "The Church will be here presented as the Social State in which the Spirit of Christ reigns: as embracing the general life and society of men, and identifying itself with these as much as possible: as having for its object to imbue all human relations with the spirit of Christ's self-renouncing love,

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Benjamin Kidd, *The Science of Power*.

and thus to change the world into a Kingdom of God." <sup>19</sup> Harnack in 1899 delivered in Berlin the famous lectures quickly translated into English under the title of *What Is Christianity?* and the book had great influence in the movement to humanize theology. A deep humanitarian interest was revealed in the work of "The French Ritschlians," notably in Auguste Sabatier's *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion* (1898), and at about the same time appeared in England J. S. Lidgett's *The Fatherhood of God* and *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, and shortly afterwards W. F. Lofthouse's *Ethics and Atonement*—books which offered an interpretation of Christianity as the strongest possible ally of the rising social passion. Since the beginning of the century English and European theology has paid increasing attention to the idea of the Kingdom of God, and the work of such outstanding men as Ernest Troeltsch and Nathan Soderblom—whose recent death was a loss to the whole of Christendom—of William Temple and Charles Gore and W. R. Inge and A. E. Garvie, makes it clear that the recognized leaders of Christian thought are not satisfied merely to proclaim "the Social Gospel," but that they are also seeking to give it the support of an adequate philosophy. It would be difficult to find a more satisfying social philosophy which is at the same time profoundly Christian than is represented in Garvie's *The Christian Ideal for Human Society*. Garvie believes that we should come nearer to the mind of Christ if the phrase "the Kingdom of God" were changed to "the Family of God." A similar trend is apparent in America. A definite beginning was made in 1895, with the publication by William DeWitt Hyde of his *Outlines of Social Theology*. "I have called it Social Theology," he wrote, "because the Christianity of Christ and his disciples was preeminently a social movement, and because we are looking at everything to-day from the social rather than the individualistic point of view." <sup>20</sup> Henry Churchill King did especially significant work in this connection. In 1901 appeared his *Reconstruction in Theology*, and while considerable atten-

<sup>19</sup> Page 1.

<sup>20</sup> Preface, pg. vi.

tion was necessarily given to the new scientific and biblical theories as bases for theological revision, the book contained a notable chapter on "The Influence of the Deepening Sense of the Value and Sacredness of the Person," and the proposed reconstruction of theology was in terms of "personal relations." King worked out his position more fully in his *Theology and the Social Consciousness*,<sup>21</sup> and later, in *The Ethics of Jesus*,<sup>22</sup> he took such teachings of Jesus as even a radical critic like Schmiedel was willing to allow were unquestionable and showed that even in these were already present the bases of the social theology. The amount of work done in the field by American scholars since that time has been so abundant that a bibliography of it would fill a volume: the mere mention of such names as Peabody, Rauschenbusch, W. A. Brown, Shailer Mathews, and C. A. Ellwood suggests how rich the field is. Rauschenbusch's *A Theology for the Social Gospel* was in no sense a great book considered simply as a piece of theology, and the author obviously lacked certain technical qualifications for his task, but there was a heart-throb in it, and it showed a clear enough grasp of the fundamental issue. Significant also was the reception given to Ellwood's *Reconstruction of Religion*, which proceeded almost entirely on sociological lines, and more recently such New Testament scholars as Bundy, McCown, and Case have shown how impossible it is to do justice to either the origins or the purpose of Christianity without the largest possible use of the social concepts.

But there is still much more to be done. King's suggestion that theology must be expressed in terms of personal relations provides a clue that needs to be followed out on a still larger scale. This cannot be done without an adequate philosophy of the human person. The elucidation of the Biblical bases of a socialized theology was well enough. It was a much needed undertaking. We cannot have too many books like C. C. McCown's *The Genesis of the Social Gospel*, or F. J. McConnell's *The Prophetic Ministry*, or C. Anderson Scott's *New Testament*

<sup>21</sup> 1902.<sup>22</sup> 1910.

*Ethics*, or M. S. Enslin's *The Ethics of Paul*, or B. W. Bacon's *Jesus, Son of God*, or E. F. Scott's *The Kingdom of God*. Books like these help us to set our compass. They made clear what are the marching orders of the church. They show us that the social ideals of the prophets, and of Jesus, and of Paul, have an amazing vitality. But besides the question of vitality is the question of *validity*. Wherein lies the ultimate authority of these ideals? A question so momentous as that cannot be answered offhand. It involves the entire philosophical interpretation of life, such as is attempted in books like W. R. Sorley's *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, G. T. W. Patrick's *The World and Its Meaning*, Charles Gore's *The Philosophy of the Good Life*, and A. E. Taylor's *The Faith of a Moralist*. What is man? Whence came he? What is his significance in the scheme of things? Is he justified in making his own needs the criteria of his hopes and his beliefs? If he is so justified, how shall he discriminate between needs which are intrinsic and fundamental and needs which are fanciful and superficial? A theology expressed in terms of personal relations can have authority and finality only if personality itself can be given an ultimate character. But on a superficial view, this ultimateness is just the quality which human personality does not seem to have. In many quarters to-day, mechanism is put above personality, the personal being regarded as just one more temporary product of an all-controlling, non-personal, mechanistic "force." Social thinking may still have a large place in a world so conceived, but it will necessarily have a purely pragmatic character—it can never be based on a metaphysic which is equally just to all the other aspects of experience. It is only as we can draft and maintain a genuinely personalistic philosophy that Christian theology, so far at least as it concerns the three great claims of the divine fatherhood, man's sonship to God, and man's brotherhood with all his kind, can be saved from merely beating the air. There is obviously a teleological relation between man and nature. Is there also a teleological relation between man and the Christian ideal? That is to say, would

the kind of men that would result from the appropriation of the Christian ideal be the kind of men that would fulfill the meaning of that whole vast process of which human life so far as its capacities and characteristics are concerned is the product? By every indication of his being, man is meant to find himself in "otherness." He can complete his individuality only as he socializes it and the socialization must be accomplished both by divine "otherness" and by human "otherness." That is the purest of empiric facts. It is evident, therefore, that when Jesus summed up the law and the prophets in love to God and love to man—divine sonship and human brotherhood—he was dealing with fundamental realities. The Christian Gospel is grounded in the deepest of facts: its authority is derived not from a book, nor from an institution, but from its manifest connection with the whole movement of life and history: and a theology that can intelligibly state and defend this will seem to the modern world to bear the marks of verisimilitude.<sup>22</sup>

## VII

Closely allied to the sociological interest in our day is the psychological. A recent book bears the title, *Behaviorism: A Battle Line!* The title may be unnecessarily aggressive, but certainly psychology is the field where the battle for the higher interests of life will be won or lost for our generation. One is sometimes a little annoyed at the astonishing claims to comprehensiveness and finality made by psychology, but these are to be charged up to the exuberance of youth. Psychology is, of course, as old as the race: men of a bygone day understood a good deal more about themselves than we sometimes give them credit for: but psychology that can in any adequate sense be called scientific is a distinctly modern development. "The New Psychology" is entitled to the adjective. The work of William James, Baldwin, and G. Stanley Hall, of Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud, C. J. Jung, Alfred Adler, and F. W. H. Myers, of W. H. R. Rivers, Morton Prince, Jastrow, Stout, Angell, and William

<sup>22</sup> See J. W. Nixon, *An Emerging Christian Faith*, chap. VII.

McDougall, opened up a vast new field of enquiry. It was inevitable that the findings should be applied to religion. Starbuck, Ames, Coe, Stratton, Cutten, Leuba, Hocking, Pratt, and many others in this country; and in Europe Durkheim, Höffding, Pfister, Wundt, Berguer, Wobbermin, R. Otto; and, with perhaps less success, Steven, W. S. Bruce, Pym, Barry, Waterhouse, James Ward, Selbie, Thouless, and others in Great Britain, have devoted themselves to the religious and theological problem in view of the new light shed by psychological theory. Whether the result has been to the advantage or otherwise of religion would still be regarded by many as a debatable point. The laying bare of the mind-process seems to have had the same effect on the present generation that the laying bare of the body-process had on a past generation: it has taken away the element of mystery, and the curious fallacy has been quite generally accepted that when we have discovered the "law" of anything—whether it be "mind" or "matter"—no further explanation of its existence is called for. Even leading psychologists, who should have known better, have supposed that psychological description was at the same time metaphysical explanation.<sup>24</sup> The fact that personality is conditioned on glandular activity does not mean that personality *is* glandular activity, although the false equation has often been stated. It would be calamity indeed if the result of studying the psychology of prayer should be that men ceased to pray, or if the result of their studying the process whereby the idea of God is arrived at should be the conclusion that God is *only* an idea. Since all human experience is necessarily mental, and since objectivity becomes subjectivity in the very act of being known, the attempt to get rid of the validity of the religious experience on the ground that it is purely subjective endangers a great deal more than religion: it endangers the validity of the entire human approach to truth. Psychology is a two-edged sword, and the user may easily cut off his own head with it. Thus if William James showed the value of the new technique in his

<sup>24</sup> See J. B. Pratt, *Matter and Spirit*.



*Varieties of Religious Experience*, G. Stanley Hall revealed, in his ill-starred volumes, *Jesus in the Light of Psychology*, the dangers of its indiscriminate and uninformed application. If F. W. H. Myers, in his *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, brought comfort to the souls of many, J. H. Leuba, in his famous questionnaire on *Belief in God and Immortality*, as in most of his other writings, sought to destroy in religion all objective reference and to explain it without the help of "transcendent causes." If J. B. Pratt, in *The Religious Consciousness*, boldly affirmed the reality of the object of faith and worship, E. S. Ames, in his *Psychology of the Religious Experience*, as also in his more recent *Religion*, was satisfied to reduce God to a form of "idealized reality," as he expressed it—that is to say, to a pure subjectivity. The suspicion felt by many, that psychology as applied to the sphere of religion was likely to set the cause of religion back, has therefore not been altogether unwarranted. It is obvious that there can be no permanent psychology of religion unless the supply of religious experience can be maintained, and more than one person has feared that the psychologist was so dealing with religion, its grounds, its processes, its objects, as to endanger the continuance of his own subject matter. Grensted takes the position that if religious ideas are nothing but subjective fantasies, and men in general become convinced of this, it is only a question of time before the ideas themselves will be abandoned. But he also claims that to surrender objectivity in religion logically requires its surrender everywhere else.<sup>25</sup> Questions such as these have naturally occurred to the mind of thousands. The solid gains on the side of a better technique in religious education, the more scientific elucidation of the laws of the spiritual life, with a view to their individual and social application, and the possible release of the mind from morbid fears engendered by false ideas and beliefs—these gains have been too often overlooked by those who suspected psychology of a purpose to disturb the very

<sup>25</sup> See L. W. Grensted, *Psychology and God*, Longmans Green & Co., 1930, especially chaps. II and VII.

foundations of the religious life. If Watsonian Behaviorism, with its genius for manufacturing a prolific supply of ready-made excuses for all sorts of misbehavior, and of persuading men that nothing they did really mattered very much—if this said the last word on the subject, the anxiety in question would perhaps be defensible. Fortunately, however, there are plenty of men for whom psychology is not a maze in which to wander and become lost, but a well-marked path along which they may travel to the very City of God.

It would be difficult to find a finer example of the use of psychological principles in behalf of the religious view of life than W. E. Hocking's *Human Nature and Its Remaking*. Like his *Meaning of God in Human Experience*, the book gives one a sense of confidence in the reality of those aspects of life and thought which mankind has been accustomed to regard as most important. Hocking is as competent a philosopher as any on the American continent to-day, and his philosophy leads right on to an inescapable conviction of the reality of God. He is no less competent in the field of psychology. His analysis of human nature and of its original constituents, and his examination of the manifest significance of individual and social experience, issuing as this does in the conclusion that the process of experience is at the same time a process of remaking, that that remaking will be most clearly the truest which gives fullest expression to all that is most fundamentally and distinctively human, that it is precisely this kind of remaking which Christianity proposes to bring about in the race, and that in such a remaking there is, as Christianity itself claims, an "invasion" of the human by the divine—all this gives us in the work of Hocking a case for Christianity expressed in psychological terms which will remain a classic for years to come.

#### VIII

It is according as it employs the psychological approach that the theology of the immediate future will make its appeal. There are encouraging signs that what for a while threatened to be

theologically destructive—and may continue to be so if it is not wisely handled—is gradually being laid under tribute for the revitalizing of well-established theological concepts. Much of the work here is necessarily at present cautious and tentative. We are not yet by the stage of criticism and opposition. This is evident in the chapter on "The New Psychology" in Charles Harris' recent revision of his *Pro Fide*. Harris finds in the New Psychology "the chief danger to religion and to Christian standards of morality,"\* but he nowhere manifests a purpose to direct its principles to more constructive ends. Something of the same nervousness is evident also in places in the work of even so able a theologian as L. W. Grensted, who in his Bampton Lectures for 1930, entitled *Psychology and God*, regards the New Psychology as the most dangerous enemy of religious faith to-day, for the reason that it treats religion as so much self-projected illusion—"wishful thinking"—or the result of carefully planned social suggestion. He rightly maintains that the very essence of human experience is in felt personal relationships, and when he considers religious experience he carries the argument to the point where a personal God becomes the legitimate and even inescapable demand. But theology must be less afraid of psychology than it appears to be in these pages, or than in A. E. J. Rawlinson's chapter on "Psychology and Theology" in *Psychology and the Sciences*. For this reason a cordial welcome must be given to Clifford E. Barbour's *Sin and the New Psychology*. It cannot be called a great book—it is not sufficiently sure of either its psychology or its theology for that—but it is a *timely* book, more theological than the discussion of sin in Hocking's *Human Nature and Its Remaking*, and much more complete than the suggestive chapter on "The Psychological View of Sin" in R. S. Moxon's *The Doctrine of Sin*. Barbour uses the leading conceptions of the New Psychology to rehabilitate the Christian doctrine of sin as traditionally understood. He relates sin to the admitted fact of psychic evil; original sin to the fact of the unity of the race, whereby

\* Pg. xlv, 4th edition.

all are present in each; temptation he relates to natural impulse; conscience to the theory of ambivalence—"the entrance into psychic activity of two opposing impulses at the same time, each antagonistic to the other, and neither being able of itself to direct the activity of the life";<sup>27</sup> confession is considered in the light of ills known to arise from long-continued repression; while forgiveness is considered in the light of "transference"—the results known to follow from complete submission to the guidance of a stronger personality. Much more pretentious than Barbour's is the volume entitled *Man and the Image of God*, by H. M. Foston. The New Testament presentation of the person of Christ as the "manifestation" of God, as the "image" of God, and as the "word" of God is treated from the standpoint of the psychological process of perception. The conative and affective processes are likewise considered with reference to God conceived respectively as Holy Spirit and as Father. In a word, Foston attempts to arrive at the conclusion that since a certain tri-unity of mind underlies all intellectual organization and development, we may properly expect that some fundamental triune form of Reality should underlie all of nature and of history. The conclusion, of course, is highly speculative, but it is speculation of the type that challenged the brilliant intellect of Augustine, and the facts upon which it is based are facts of the strictest empiric psychology. Surely theology does not need to hang its head when what is usually regarded as its most abstract conception, that of a Divine Trinity, is receiving illumination from the side of psychological theory.

Easily the most significant, however, of the contemporary efforts to make psychology theological and theology psychological is W. M. Horton's *The Psychological Approach to Theology*. The book is confessedly an eirenicon. Horton feels that the two disciplines have been altogether too suspicious of each other. He believes that the subject matter of theology—religious experience—has permanent validity. He believes that the technique of psychology can be employed for the clarifying

<sup>27</sup> Pg. 165.

and the deepening of the experience. He sees nothing particularly sacrosanct in the mere language in which, in the past, religious experience has been expressed. He knows that all sorts of bizarre claims have been made by psychology, but he sees the possibility of clearer thinking compelling a modification of these demands. He therefore summons theology and psychology to what he calls "a disarmament conference," and he invites them "to sign a pact of mutual amity and respect, to the end that they may jointly promote the cause of the development of human personality."<sup>28</sup> Horton brings the whole issue down into the sphere of the manifest needs of life itself. Both psychology and theology have to do with human nature, and both agree that in human nature are ideal possibilities that need to be realized. In this realization, psychology and religion can work hand in hand. The ideal is so often perverted, and psychology can show why and how. That Jesus Christ may be intimately related to this ideal is undeniable. In whatever terms theology may state this relationship, psychology will still function in the process whereby the relationship is actually realized in human experience. But whence comes all this that is open to human nature and whither is it moving? Horton answers the question by boldly affirming "God." He will not reduce religious experience to a mere psychologism. It is not a purely self-contained process, with no objective reference. Nor is it a process with time-limits. The corollary of the religious experience as bringing human nature to its ideal development is not only God as its source but immortality as its outcome. Leuba and many others like him have been so treating religious experience in the name of psychology as to get rid of both God and immortality. Horton, entirely fair to every legitimate claim of psychology, but also entirely fair to the proper demands of religious experience, especially in its Christian form, uses psychology to rehabilitate the reality of God and the complete reasonableness of the immortal hope.

<sup>28</sup> W. M. Horton, *The Psychological Approach to Theology*, Harper & Brothers, 1931, Introduction.

This marks the direction along which theology will increasingly be seen to go. In this respect it will be true to its own history as that history has been interpreted in the present discussion. The root facts are in life and experience. Whatever lifts human life to its highest level thereby stands self-vindicated. He who says that the Christian ideal for the individual and for society is not only the highest the world knows but fits exactly into the whole framework of human nature itself, takes a position that cannot be overthrown. It then remains to elaborate this ideal, to call in the aid of the logical understanding to track down its various implications, and to call in the aid of the practical understanding to devise means whereby the ideal may become operative in the life of men. That in tradition, whether of expression or of practice, which is no longer helpful, must be laid aside. That in the pulsating life about us which is commanding human interest must be laid under tribute to Christian ends. Experience points to God. In that case, to know God and to order life according to his will, still remains "the chief end of man."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> For a fuller discussion of this closing paragraph, see E. Lewis, *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest*, and *God and Ourselves*.

### XIII

## THE BIBLE TODAY AND TOMORROW

CHESTER WARREN QUIMBY

IN our grandfather's day the Bible was everywhere, on the parlor table, in the bedroom, on the pulpit, in the Sunday School class. On Sunday worshippers carried it to service, and followed with the minister as he read the chapter for the day and gave out his text. All sorts of people read it, saint and sinner, churchman and infidel. The godly worshipped with it at daily family prayers and many of the ungodly often poured over its pages. Many frontiersmen in log cabins, living hard rough lives and making no profession of religion, as well as educated townsmen, devoured its pages.

The reason for this widespread reading of the Bible is easy to understand. Life in the villages was hard and slow, with little culture and less amusement. Books were scarce, papers few, magazines rare. Intellectual starvation was universal. But there was the Bible, rich in history, story, poetry, drama and proverb. Believer and non-believer alike read it. The believer because it was the very word of God and the light to heaven; the non-believer to satisfy his hungry mind or to dispute with his believing neighbors. To them the Bible was the very word of God. It was faultless of error and its authority was final and irrefutable. Such absolute confidence in it gave power in argument, surety to faith, comfort to the mind, and hope to the soul. Men knew in what they believed and could prove it with chapter and verse. Their religion was beyond the peradventure of a doubt.

All this amuses us a little now—the text-proving, the sec-

tarian arguments, and the making *Leviticus* equal with *John*. But it rendered a great service. It made the preachers of the day almost literally men of one book. They knew the texts and incidents of the Bible. They had exposition texts and proof texts for controversies, doctrinal preaching, sectarian beliefs, evangelistic appeals, and personal edification. Sabbath after Sabbath they opened unto their people the scriptures, declaring, "This is the way, walk ye in it." That all this was often crude, frequently narrow, and repeatedly personal must not obscure the fact that they bred up their listeners in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and staunch personal piety. Thus the people, also, became a folk largely of one Book. They knew its heroes, incidents and doctrines. Thus it helped to make the nation literate, familiarized it with a great and ancient literature and aided in laying a basis for culture. It gave a background for religious interest and discussion, set before the people moral precepts and strengthened their moral fiber. Let no one sneer at the crude literalism of our forefathers. This Bible made them men of conviction, earnestness and faith.

Then came the period of decline. The days when the Bible was commonly read began to disappear. Gradually it ceased to appear on the parlor table. Men no longer carried it to church, the "lesson leaflet" usurped its place in Sunday School, the altar fires of family prayers began to flicker out. More and more the saints read it less and less, and the sinners gave it up altogether. In the pulpit the topical sermon began to supplant the textual. The Bible fell into formal respect and adulation of lip service.

The causes for this decline were inevitable. With the settling up of the country came more of leisure, better education, larger culture and a flood of reading matter. The Bible had to face competition. People were no longer intellectually starved nor idle for amusement. They began to be saturated with printed matter and glutted with social activities. And the Bible was largely forgotten. The interest, though effective, had been superficial. Men good and evil had turned to it as a refuge from their mental poverty and recreational limitations. But with the



coming of reading and recreational resources in abundance the Bible fell into neglect. Play absorbed leisure time and the new reading matter was easier to understand. It is easier to read a newspaper than a psalm, to understand a novel than a parable, to enjoy a magazine than a prophecy, to peruse a weekly than commit the Commandments. Only where religious enthusiasm was earnest did the Bible remain a lamp to the feet and light to the pathway.

The coming of "criticism," careful scientific scholarship, was another cause of the Bible's decline. It destroyed its miraculous, absolute authority. It raised puzzling questions, found errors and contradictions. It refused to weigh *Leviticus* and *John* equally. One had to know before he spoke. The average believer was at once over his depth. A Biblical quotation, of itself, no longer sufficed, text-picking became taboo. One had to know the background and context first. It became difficult to teach a Sunday School Class. Backgrounds, contexts, explanations and "modern applications" had to be mastered. The graded lessons began to appear that attempted to suit the Biblical material to the developing ages of man. Thus it became harder to preach the Bible. Texts were no longer sufficient. Nor could the preacher assume any knowledge on the part of his congregation; he had to start his sermon facing a blank in Biblical matters. Less and less he discussed the great doctrines. More and more he hung his text upon a topic of the day. A kind of quasi-preaching called "popular preaching" became the rule. Even in the ministerial study and in the pulpit the Bible was shunted aside. The few preachers who had gained the new knowledge did not pass it on to their people lest they "upset their faith." So they chose "safe" subjects and kept peace. The Bible as the religious center of the pious home, the parsonage study and the pulpit discourse vanished.

The results have been good and evil. Look first at the evil. The Bible has become the most sold and the least read of books. The largest selling secular book recently was *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It sold two and a quarter million copies. All

told, thirty million copies of novels were sold. But the Bible sold thirty-six million copies! An old book, after centuries of sale, is still beyond all competition. "The old Book outsells them all by many times!" But we are self-deceived. Its sale is not due to its being read. It is not bought because people are eager to devour it. It has back of it the church universal pushing it, exalting it, proclaiming it, protecting it—though so little reading or practicing it. It has back of it a gripping sentiment. It was mother's book and grandmother's. It is the preacher's book. It is the key to salvation. It is always a suitable gift, for Christmas, for birthdays, for son or daughter when they leave for college. It is always accepted with real gratitude, then put on the table, shelf, or left in the bottom of the trunk, forgotten. It is a propaganda book. It is scattered liberally the world over in hotels, on mission fields, in institutions, by churches, organizations and missionaries. Everything conspires to sell the Bible. If left to itself, like other books, to make its way on its own merits and its popular appeal, one wonders what its sales would total. That their decline would be disastrous is certain though they would probably continue to exceed all other books. But we must not deceive ourselves. We must not think that because the Bible is selling it is likewise being studied. And this adds a colossal danger. To have the Bible sold but not read is to bring it into scorn. Never since printing made it cheaply accessible to even the poorest, and in face of our universal education and multiplied churches, has ignorance of the Bible been more appalling.

Of course expository preaching has almost disappeared. Facing an audience Biblically blank, dealing with a Book hard to master, preaching in a day when sectarianism is homiletically taboo and controversies no longer settled by quoting texts, and standing before congregations demanding moral pap, how can the poor preacher be expected to dig out enriching Biblical sermons? The situation has become almost ludicrous. For the *style* of "taking a text" hangs on. How often one hears, "I am speaking today on 'Making the Most of Life,' and I suppose I must

take a text." Recently a noted Bishop began, "I intend to speak on 'Motives.' I have no text though before I get done I shall have several texts. But if anyone here must have a text, if he insists upon a text, if he demands that he cannot listen to a sermon without a text, then let him turn to *John* 10:10." Was the Bishop catering to a custom, excusing himself, or trying to make his text more impressive? Another preacher began by reading, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." And he continued, "I am to preach on 'The Church.' I suppose many texts could be found to justify one in preaching on 'The Church.' There must be many good texts in the Bible for this subject." He then proceeded to deliver a very ordinary and conventional discourse defending the church, with nothing whatever in it of "Go ye," "all the world," "the gospel," or "every creature." One could not help feeling that he had been too indifferent to hunt out some of Paul's fine texts. And one wonders how he could have been, apparently, so Biblically ignorant as not to have *recalled* some good text. So bare of the Bible has modern preaching become!

The church service has become equally bare. It used to include two scripture lessons usually a full chapter long. Practically everywhere now one of the lessons is omitted entirely and the other is shortened to a fragment of verses usually connected with the coming text. In most cases how stilted and mechanical is even this bit of reading! Nobody listens. The inevitable "May God add his blessing to the reading of his holy word" falls like a repeated sacrilege. Many a preacher, to save time, omits the scripture lessons altogether. We are in a hurry. So the word of God is no longer a means of worship.

The Bible has been relegated to a corner in our theological training. Such training used to be almost exclusively Biblical. It was entirely too narrowly so. But that day has gone. Economics, psychology, religious education, social service, comparative religion, the "art" of worship, finance, organization, missions have all come in—and rightly. But the Bible has had to suffer. It is no longer a chief center of interest. And the young

ministerial graduate is faced with a tragedy. In his first church he finds he must preach twice a week, lead a prayer-meeting, usually teach a Sunday School class, besides conducting an occasional funeral. According to tradition these must all be Biblical. From one hundred fifty to two hundred times a year he must stand before a group—practically the same group always—with an open Bible, and say something. It is his major task, yet in all his training, in his boyhood Sunday School, in the preaching he heard as a youth, and in his seminary training the Bible has been a side-issue. In sheer despair he is compelled to resort to popular preaching hung on a text.

The preacher, however, is not entirely to blame for this state of affairs. In his grandfather's day, the preacher's work was simple. He preached, attended pastoral duties, raised local finances and a little for missions. Then his work was done. He had time to search the scriptures, dig out texts and expound great passages. Books were few, his salary small, and the Bible always at hand. But with the coming of the printed floods, the ubiquitous amusements and the speeding up of life, crowds forsook the church. They had never been vitally interested. But the church was the only interesting place to which they could go, so they went. When other attractions came they left. Then the church made a fatal discovery. *She discovered that by becoming a center of activities herself she could drum people into her buildings and membership.* In consequence, on the grounds of this or that activity, she "sold" herself to the religiously indifferent. Organizations multiplied. Membership increased. This machinery had to be kept going, and to hold ground new wheels had to be added. And the whole of this colossal, intricate machine was laid on the back of the poor preacher. He became, and for the most part now is, an ecclesiastical chore-boy. Quite generally today we have neither priests to lead us in worship nor prophets to call us to higher ethical living, but religious mechanics whose chief chore is to keep the cogs from slipping. Having gotten members in upon this false basis, the show must go on or they will leave. And a falling membership

is the doom of any preacher. One cannot be a prophet and an ecclesiastical juggler, or an able expounder of the Word and an oiler of machinery. Forced to choose between neglecting the Bible and losing his flock, the Bible has had to go.

Among the laity the results have been equally disastrous. It amounts to almost "total ignorance." Large numbers of the older generation knew the Bible in a literal and spiritual fashion. They could draw comfort from its pages. They memorized its psalms and promises. But the modern generation knows little of the Bible. Recently a high school girl went home shocked because the speaker had portrayed Paul as physically small. "His bodily presence is mean."<sup>1</sup> She had always heard that Paul was a "great" man! And she was a minister's daughter. On making a pastoral call one day the good woman asked me a Biblical question, and I in turn called for her Bible. She did not have one. And she was the village's most cultured woman, and the star Sunday School teacher. To anyone familiar with the situation these are not surprising or isolated cases. They are typical. Some twenty years ago—and what a different world it was twenty years ago!—in our high school English course we came across, in *Macbeth*, a reference to Golgotha. It was a typical small city class of that time. Nearly all the pupils had been sent regularly to Sunday School. Practically all the parents were church members. Some of the pupils had come up through the parochial grammar school. But upon close questioning the teacher could find but one student who knew to what Golgotha referred. The teacher, herself unusually well-informed and capable, declared *Job* to be the oldest book ever written!

The modern college student is no better. He enters the class in English Bible with fear and trembling. He knows he knows nothing. And what he thinks he knows is wrong! He fears he will be bored, find little of intellectual interest, and waste his time. Thus most college students shy away from Bible courses. A recent survey showed that about seventy per cent, even when

<sup>1</sup> II Corinthians 10:10. American Standard Version.

able, take no Bible. Universally it is the best students that are the shyest. Second-raters think the course will be Sunday School twaddle, easy, and sign up. Good students scorn such practices. Yet when they do take the course, it is they who find the Bible captivating. They are not to be blamed for fighting shy of the Bible. They have been bored with it in Sunday School, heard the preacher mumble it in the scripture lesson and desert it in the sermon, and seen their parents ignore it in the home. Why should they give attention to it? Mathematics they know, and biology, but not the Bible.

The result of this ignorance is tragic. The old heroes they do not know, the lofty music of the psalms has never entered their ears, of the idealism of the prophets they are ignorant, the ethical challenge of the Sermon on the Mount they do not understand. Their forefathers' knowledge was simple but it was real. They walked with Abraham, they sang with David, they dreamed with Isaiah, they suffered with Paul and died with Jesus. They sang the psalms, committed the beatitudes, argued the doctrines of Paul and dreamed of heaven. But the modern laity are Biblically ignorant. None of these things fill their minds. Their heroes are Colonel Lindbergh, Jack Dempsey and Babe Ruth, Admiral Byrd, Douglas Fairbanks and Bobby Jones. And the current joke is to josh the Bible professor about Amos and—no, not Hosea—but Amos and Andy! The period of decline has reached bottom.

But it is not all loss. There have been great gains, the greatest gains in history. We are on the threshold of a new day. We stand at the dawn of the greatest period the Bible has known. If we will, we can have the Bible as men have never possessed it. The years of loss were as inevitable as the stars, though a little courage on the part of the clergy might have greatly lessened the loss. But that is history. We face a new day.

We have a better Bible. Modern scholarship has given us sufficient light to enable us to see the truth and make us free. For the first time we have an adequate Biblical background, the

times, history, customs and authorship. Problems that puzzled our fathers, often dismayed them and sometimes were a cause for jeering by the ungodly no longer exist. Religious practices, historical events, outlines of contents, and reasons for writing are now set forth so that he who will may learn. Moreover there are floods of Biblical helps. Introductions to the Old and New Testaments abound. Commentaries of every sort, big and little, learned and elementary, in one volume or a score of volumes, flourish. Background books and Biblical dictionaries which treat of history, customs, religious development, and which organize, clarify and relate Biblical knowledge increase. Books upon special phases of Biblical matter multiply. Never has there been such an array of Biblical knowledge within the range of every sort of reader. All who will may explore the Bible for himself inexpensively, under expert guidance, and according to his ability and needs. Every nook of the Bible has been exposed, and all that is essential is now set forth so adequately that the wayfaring man may study and understand.

Better yet, we have what is practically a new Bible. Years of toil over the ancient manuscripts have corrected the text and clarified the translation so that modern scholarship has given us essentially a new book. This is seen at once in such new translations as Goodspeed's, Weymouth's, Moffatt's, McFadyen's, *The Old Testament, An American Translation*, and others. They are more than re-phrasings of the Bible, they are new translations, using the results of modern scholarship and bringing to the reader a clearness and exactness of meaning never before possible. It is hard to over-state their importance, or sufficiently express full gratitude to the men who have so terribly toiled to produce them. Unless one is quite familiar with the older versions and has honestly tried to decipher some of their difficult and obsolete phrases one has little conception of the glory that these new translations have given to the Bible. How plain, how vivid they have made so many hard passages! As a gray-haired, sweet-faced woman recently said, holding up her Goodspeed, "I have entered a new world. I never knew the

Bible was so beautiful. No wonder they call it the Word of Life." In spite of all the criticisms they have evoked, and sometimes rightly, these new translations are slowly but rightly crowding out the standard versions.

With this new learning has come a new emphasis. Due partly to the spirit of the times, partly to our wider knowledge generally, and partly to this larger Biblical information, the older Biblical emphasis has gone. Text-proof picking is doomed and arsenals of proof-texts are vanishing. Making the Bible a sectarian book to support private doctrine or bolster up denominational prestige has become a disgrace. Trying to support any cause good or evil—prohibition, war, pacificism, light wines—by sticking texts together is to make oneself laughable. The Bible has been set free to become the Word of God and the Word of Life. The modern Biblical reader is freed from all these foolish technicalities to master its amazing story and message. Unhampered he can now see the struggles man had searching for God and seeking the good life. He can look at once at nations in commotion. Directly he can watch Israel led of God, finding God, deserting God. He can see at once the disaster of evil upon men and nations, and the joy of goodness upon peoples and saints. Immediately he can know the sorrows and hopes, defeats and triumphs of heroes who looked for a city, glorious, unfading in the heavens. He can learn unhindered the moral foundations that glorify nations and build character, or the evils that overthrow society and ruin life. Plainly he can behold the agonizing story of the patient, thwarted, misunderstood love of God, seeking until it finds, suffering until it dies. And all of it realized in fullness in the face of Christ Jesus. All quibbling gone! Freedom to emphasize life, love and God!

What a gain this means in authority! The Bible is now truer than ever. Not because one can quote it on all subjects, astronomical, geographical, anthropological. That cannot be done. Not because it is errorless and without contradictions. There are both. Not because we have not outgrown parts of it, for



we have. Jesus, long ago, with his "But I say unto you" something very different from Moses, put us forever beyond some of it. But the Bible's authority as the Word of Life and the Word of God is beyond challenge. To anyone who will master it there will come an insight that will make him actually wiser than his fellows, a religious faith whose sanity and enthusiasm no tragedy can shake, and a wonder at the amazing love and patience of God that will anchor him to the throne of grace. And it will happen quietly, surely, not because of any external sledge-hammer authority being forced upon him, but because the inner authority of the Book itself has mastered him.

All this means the possibility of better expository preaching. There are those who lament the passing of the older expository preaching, but it would be utterly inadequate now. "Break up the fallow ground in your hearts" <sup>a</sup> was a great call to individual repentance, but to use it now, as was the custom, with little reference to or knowledge of Hosea and his times would be traitorous to the scriptures. Even in the heated days of 1917 the use of Paul's "Ye are called to freedom" <sup>a</sup> as an incentive to war was almost a scandal. Today it would be intolerable. We need an expository preaching of a new sort. *We need the kind that begins with life, its need, sins, dreams, pains and hopes, and out of the vast experience of the Bible brings light and healing and the vision of God.* We need exposition that expounds the truths about God, that deals with the great characters as they really were, that outlines the great messages of the various books, and that sets forth the great religious realities of life. The old controversies, the old sectarian rivalries and the older narrow individualism are vanishing. They no longer hold the crowd. People want life.

What an opportunity this is! With all the helps at hand to make the Bible vivid and alive, every preacher should endeavor to brand the Bible upon the hearts of his people. Yet how it is being neglected! Being still the ecclesiastical jack-of-all-trades the preacher has no time to master the book for himself. Re-

<sup>a</sup> See Hosea 10:12.    <sup>a</sup> Galatians 5:13. American Standard Version.

cently I got to thinking over a possible address on "Sermons I Have Never Heard." Never one on the deity of Jesus. I have heard it asserted in thunders, but never expounded. Only one in twenty years on immortality. We think we cannot preach on that except at Easter, and on Easter we give way to the choir. Never one on death though all men come to it. Nothing on the religious meaning of the body though "we are the temple of the Holy Spirit." Nothing whatever on sex though we are sex crazy just now, and "male and female made He them." Not a syllable on the Holy Spirit, not even in the recent pentecostal anniversary. Nothing on the Bible in general, or in parts, save two only. One was of eloquent generalities on the Psalms over the radio by Cadman, the other was an excellent one years ago in my college days by Tittle. No discourses on miracles though the Bible abounds in miracles, and miracles have always been a point of sore issue. Not a syllable on hell or heaven. No series, either, on Jesus' parables though they ought to make thrilling sermons. Nothing on the Trinity though it is emphasized in every benediction. And only two on God. One by George A. Gordon on "The Patience of God" and the other over the radio by Fosdick on the "Greatness of God." Nor have I heard the great Biblical characters delineated, nor Jesus' life made real in a series of discourses, nor anything on prayer except for three lectures by Fosdick in my college days. Nor any searching exposition of the vital meaning of love or sacrifice. I am not exaggerating. Not in the twenty-five years from my high school days can I recall hearing these essential matters discussed as such. I have gone faithfully to what have been reputed to be exceptionally good churches, and heard preachers above the average. From questions that I constantly get from my students and others, I judge that my experience is average. If this does seem grossly exaggerated, let it be noted that no less a preacher than Dr. Miles H. Krumbine recently confessed that in sixteen years of preaching he had never preached on "Hell." He was led to do so finally by the urgent and unanimous request of his *young* people! In view of past theology, the many Biblical

statements, current profanity, and the moral tragedies of human life, it would seem that "Hell" is a very important subject. But one almost never hears real issues touched upon in the average Sunday-by-Sunday sermons. Instead of Good News, preaching is usually "Purely prudential advice presented in the wrappings of divine authority," "old saws dressed up in theological garments." The cause of this, I suppose, is that most preachers are inadequately trained, busy to exasperation, it is not the popular mood now, and it is the hardest of all preaching. And also because of an unconscious self-deception. We think that because we have *mentioned* these things in our sermons, and with emphasis, Sunday after Sunday, we have actually preached upon them. But in reality we never have. There is a vast difference between merely mentioning a matter though it be with vehemence and repetition, and expounding it. It is the exposition that we need. Now we are free to do it! No longer are we tied to little texts, no more need vital passages remain a mystery, no longer must we give ourselves to petty doctrines. The great book is wide open with its great messages of life and God awaiting great preaching.

What of the future? With the past behind us, with the decline at its lowest possible ebb, with these mighty gains in hand, what of tomorrow? Our first need is a new, authoritative translation. It is sure to come. All signs point to it. The flood of new translations and the clever modernizations are a sure prophecy that it is at hand. The King James version is doomed. Sorry as some may be to lose it, it is no longer adequate. Let us praise it for its long and glorious history, laud it for its rich and sonorous diction, revere it for its blessings upon mankind. But as a translation it is now obsolete, and its lofty but now archaic style is largely unintelligible to the modern mind. Pass the King James version must and no effort will stop it. The recent act of one great denomination to ensure the reading of naught but this grand old version from the pulpit is vain legislation. As well turn back the centuries! Let us shed no tears. Let us rejoice in the untold good it wrought and let us be glad

that we can now have an even more meaningful version that will speak to us in the tongue wherein we were born. At present we are in transition. We live in the days between the majestic, authorized old, and the to-be-authorized new. We welter in a variety of modern versions each speaking in its own tongue, and we are confused by the jangle. A new version we must have, modern, clear, bold, and nobly phrased. It will be criticized, even ridiculed, as has every new version from Jerome's, but eventually it will win its triumph and begin blessing mankind far beyond even its great, great predecessor.

But we need more than a new wording of the scriptures, we need a *new form*. All that the new translations have done is to give us a more accurate wording of the Bible in modern speech. That is not enough. *We need also to put before the people the Bible so printed that it shall show at once the major conclusions of modern scholarship.* That can be done. Some modern versions have already timidly and partially pointed the way. It now needs to be carried out to its full glory. It is merely a matter of printing. Moffatt has begun in a small way by printing the J document of the Pentateuch in italics and making some needed textual rearrangements, as in John's gospel. This must be continued. Four kinds of type could be used to reveal all the documents of the Pentateuch, or the letters, J, E, D, P, could be properly printed in the margins. A single page of explanation inserted before *Genesis* would suffice. This should be carried on as far as possible through the historical books. In *Job* the interpolated sections could be relegated to a place after the Epilogue, the confused chapters re-arranged and brief foot-notes give the reason, as Moffatt and McFadyen have done. *Isaiah* could be similarly treated. In chapters 1 to 39 those clearly not from *Isaiah* could be so labeled and their dates given. So too, the doubtful chapters. Chapters 40-55 should begin a new book called "The Great Prophet of the Exile" with "Isaiah 40-55" printed under this title in parenthesis. Then let the chapters and verses go right on as now. Then a third book "Later Voices of the Restoration" could be made of chapters

56-66. A single page of explanation and an occasional foot-note would be all that is further necessary. So also, each in its own way, could the other books be printed. Each book should be preceded by a single sheet of explanation. In some cases a sub-title should be printed as with I and II *Chronicles*, where the sub-title should read, "An Ecclesiastical History of Israel." Important dates ought to be printed in their proper places along the margins and beneath the titles. This is particularly important in the historical and prophetic books. In the New Testament it might prove difficult to indicate the main inter-relation of the Synoptics, but I am inclined to think that it can be done. The dislocations in John should be set forth in somewhat the order of Moffatt. It certainly should be shown that II *Corinthians* is not a single letter, but several fragments. And some of the simpler re-arrangements of the latter part of the Revelation should be adopted. Throughout the Bible the plainly interpolated verses should be printed where they now are but in a finer print, as McFadyen has done. Of course the whole should be printed in modern form and sub-titled throughout as in the recent *The Old Testament, An American Translation*. It will be objected that at times there is serious doubt concerning J or E, or whether a certain verse is an interpolation or not. That problem is forever unavoidable. Translators face it perpetually. The only solution here is their solution. A choice must be made and so printed arbitrarily. In cases of extreme doubt a foot-note may be necessary. There is no other way out. It will be further objected that this will clutter the Bible up and shuffle it about. But there is really a deal less of this sort of editing necessary than at first appears. Nor is it urged that the Bible should be printed in this manner only. But there should be an edition of this sort for all serious persons who wish to have before them the Bible in the form that modern scholarship knows it.

The final result will be that the reader will have before him his Bible, books, chapters and verses in practically the order he now has it. But at the same time he will have an authentic

rendering in modern speech with the major results of scholarship printed before his eyes, with just enough explanation to convince his understanding. What a help such a Bible would be! How we need it! The day is not far hence when we shall have it. Beginnings have already been made. All we need further is some publishing company bold enough to get the proper scholars to work out the printing arrangements in detail. It is but a matter of the printer's art. Such a Bible would be welcomed by schools and colleges everywhere, and by preachers, teachers, religious educators and earnest students. How many a teacher, after having set forth some bit of modern scholarship has had some student ask him, "Where can I get a Bible that will show me that in its printing?" What a deal of explaining such an edition would save, and what a deal of questioning such a printed form would set going! It is a good thing to have people asking questions about the Bible. One can but regret that such a Bible has not already appeared.

Let no man think this will settle all our Biblical troubles. Instead it will increase them. The clearer the findings of scholarship are revealed and the plainer a fine vernacular can make it speak, the stranger will the Bible appear. Contrary to general opinion the Bible is hard, very hard to understand. For the Bible was written by spiritual geniuses, but it must be read by us who are so often but spiritual morons! How can morons grasp the insights of genius? How profound is the Bible and how deep are the themes it expounds! What is the nature of God? What is the purpose of creation? What is man? How shall man live? Is there a cure for affliction and disaster? Can man find riddance from sin? Does death end all? These are the master themes of the Bible, but who can fathom them? The writer of *Job*, the author of *Romans* and the singer of *Second Isaiah* were men of spiritual genius. Beautiful though their chapters are they are hard reading. For us who see through a glass darkly, they are often bewildering and meaningless. Any grappling with the Bible, be it by preaching, teaching, or private study must face the awful gulf between the

genius of the writer and the lagging insight of the reader. The very clarity of the Bible in some new, modern form, and the eagerness to interpret it to men will often but emphasize the depth and strangeness of this heaven-given book.

The other well-nigh insurmountable difficulty in comprehending the Bible is its profound opposition to modern life. A modern rendition of the Bible and a desire to expound it will but emphasize the fact. The Bible is ancient and oriental while we are modern and occidental. The ancient oriental lived in an unexplored and unexplained world where everything was a mystery, strange coincidences were miracles, natural causes were unknown, and God attended to everything personally. The modern occidental, however, lives in a world of scientific knowledge and control. To be sure he exaggerates his knowledge, waxes dogmatic about his scientific hypotheses, yet his is a different world. And the simple naïveté of the ancient oriental puzzles him. The ancient oriental lived amid slow, unchanging ways. The simple sounds of nature were the loudest noises that challenged his ear, new inventions never startled his placid living, and the horse was his fastest means of travel. Quiet, relaxation, the patient waiting on the slow changing seasons was his daily order. Leisure and meditation were inevitable compulsions in his life. But the modern man lives amid an organized rush. The roar of a mechanized civilization deafens his ears and daily some new invention besieges his attention. When he listens to the simple, slow living and the prolonged quiet meditations of the Bible they speak an unknown tongue he cannot understand. Again, the ancient oriental thought in vivid, concrete terms. Abstractions and generalities he abhorred. He never argued with a firstly, secondly, thirdly as the modern does, but rather, he told a story that lived out the points he wished to prove. Nor, like the modern thinker, did he lay down general principles, but rather he set forth truth in specific illustrations. He did not say, "In all cases wherein you may have suffered some smarting offense you are not to retaliate in any way whatever, but instead you are to attempt, by acts of kind-

ness and good will to turn the manifested hostility into friendly helpfulness." A modern man might not accept that but he can understand it. But when Jesus says, "If a man smites thee on the one cheek, turn thou the other also," or "Give to everyone that asketh thee" with no qualifying "ifs," "ands" or "buts," it is mystifying jargon. For the modern man thinks in analytical abstractions.

Once more, the ancient oriental considered religion a group affair. It was not just a matter of his own soul, but of the family, the tribe, the state and the social relations therein concerned. A man was "saved and his house." This needs thorough explanation to the modern man who thinks of religion as private and personal. As for the rest of the family he is often unconcerned, as for the state his religion is none of its affair, and as for his business life, let it keep hands off! Then to be told by this ancient book from its front cover to its last page that religion is a group matter is troublesome. Also, the ancient oriental, especially the ancient saint who speaks through the Bible, felt about life in direct opposition to the modern occidental. To the ancient saint the real, abiding world that needed no argument and no proof was the inner world of the mind and spirit. Of his own soul he had no doubt. The outer, changing world might be an illusion, certainly it was not the real world. Hence he lived here as a pilgrim and a stranger seeking another country. But the modern occidental cannot believe *himself*! It is his own mind and spirit that he doubts. He must have it proved that he is a soul. But the outer world of things! How sure he is of it as he gathers to himself treasures on earth. So when the ancient saint and the modern church members begin to talk together they cannot make each other out. It follows at once that to the ancient saint religion was the central, all-controlling function of life. Everything was part of his religious conviction. Even his holidays were religious festivals. But the modern occidental, even though he be a church member, makes religion but one department of life, often a very small one. What he calls "science" or "history" or "literature" or "busi-



ness" or "politics" the Biblical writers called religion, and he is confused.

Moreover, the ancient oriental conceived of religion in a fashion quite incomprehensible to the modern occidental. He was quietly content to *be*. Yet in no hermit fashion. He could preach reform like the prophets, or become an itinerant evangelist like Jesus, or be an amazingly practical missionary like Paul. But it always began with himself. What he *was* was the all-important matter. To this the modern Christian agrees—in theory, but not in practice. The typical modern Christian tries to *do*! He organizes, campaigns, conducts. He gets up movements and seeks those who will join. He does not seek to transform men, but to corral them. To him the good man is the booster who gets on board. He is not very particular what the joiner is, so long as he is conventionally respectable, for he is out to get things done. Then comes the quiet Biblical emphasis upon what one *is*, and how strange it sounds! It becomes all the stranger when he sees the ancient saint trying to *be*. Nowhere is the chasm which separates the ancient east from the modern west so wide as in their method of getting at the deepest values of life. The saint of the ancient orient did so by stripping life down. He sought to learn how simply he could live. He found that the less he embarrassed himself with the things of this world the more vivid and vital became the world of the spirit. (Strangely enough the saints of the ages, as Francis, Wesley, Gandhi and Kagawa have come to reality by the same stern way.) But to the modern this is heresy. To him the abundant life is to be achieved by abundant possessions. (This is the very essence of the social gospel.) He must have the means for culture, travel, recreation, self-enrichment, and freedom from worry. After he has acquired them he looks back at the shining souls of the ancient saints with yearning, but at their starkness with pity and incomprehension.

How shall these hard problems be vanquished? How can we get the Bible into life? How can it become a major part of the mental furniture and religious guidance of people everywhere?

There are all sorts of encouragements that this can be. The new situation regarding the Bible itself is one. The fact that it has become recognized as intellectually respectable enough to be introduced into schools and colleges is another. The Bible is now scholastically equal with chemistry and algebra. To have it put into the classrooms instead of being relegated to some after-hours voluntary study group is an enormous gain. The rising religious education movement will, when it has achieved mastery, by its demand for more time and thoroughness in religious training give the Bible a vastly greater chance. In the meantime it is up to the preacher. He must go in for real Biblical preaching. He dare not leave it for his prayer-meeting talks "where two or three are gathered together." Nor can he leave it to the Sunday School teacher, ill-trained, without equipment, to give to a group of irregular, non-studious wrigglers for twenty minutes once a week. It must become a major task of his preaching. Like Jesus, he must "open unto them the scriptures." He must begin to do so though he be faced with all the parish chores, an audience Biblically ignorant and indifferent, and every sort of competition that modern commercialism can devise. But begin he must. He must not wince. He must go bravely ahead. His predecessors put off the evil day of giving the new Bible to the people for fear of upsetting them. We now know that they avoided nothing. And in these recent years we have been paying the penalty. The preacher must go in for the Bible. In season and out he must be its expounder, until finally, some glad day, the Bible will be where it must be, back in the home, the daily counselor and consoler of the people, the foundation of our Protestant life.

We must take the Bible with intense moral earnestness. We must really believe it. We must believe it, not merely as a theological book, but as an ethical book. We must believe it enough to live it. For the Bible is not only the truth about God but also of the way to live. This is no new problem. It has been with us always. Continually we whittle the Bible. We shave its high, hard ideals down within our comfortable reach.

We never directly deny any Biblical call to noble living, but we interpret it in such a fashion that it ceases to disturb our complacency. How sure we were during the war that Jesus' "Father forgive them" <sup>4</sup> did not apply to the scribes and Sadducees but only to the soldiers. That let us out of praying for our enemies. "Love your enemies and do them good" <sup>5</sup> actually became, Hate your enemies and shoot them down. What a shorn and tattered Bible we had by the Armistice! How ashamed of ourselves we are now! But we daily emasculate the Bible in other ways equally disastrous. As for forgiving our enemies "until seventy times seven," <sup>6</sup> we know that reparations is a better way. "The disciples had all things common." <sup>7</sup> But we know that any form of communism—horrors of Russia!—is headed for disaster. We fail to see that the Acts is not describing an economic system but the effects of a thrilling religious experience. The fires of the Holy Spirit burned up the acquisitive motive, and obliterated the lines between mine and thine. No man considered anything as his own so long as another needed it more. The members of the early church not only shared the means of life, they also shared *the conditions of life*. But we will not have it so. Perhaps that is why our recent celebration of Pentecost fizzled. Did any of us want such fruits of the Spirit? A whittled, harmless Bible! That is the Bible of most of us.

Faith we hope will get us to heaven, but will it remove mountains, to say nothing of making wars to cease? "The meek shall inherit the earth," <sup>8</sup> but we know how to get it quicker and more surely with armies, treaties, commerce and mandates over backward nations! Thus we shear the Bible of its ethical power. What we fail to see is that the Bible is to be taken ethically at its face value. All men are interested in religion, most men want a religion, but few men want an ethical religion. It is the ethical precepts of the Bible that scandalize us. As Samuel Butler said, we would be shocked to hear Christianity doubted, and horrified to see it practiced. How we do get that Rich

<sup>4</sup> Luke 23:34.

<sup>7</sup> Acts 2:44.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Matthew 5:44.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 18:22.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 5:5.

Young Ruler in! We get the camel through the needle's eye even though we must invent a fictitious gate and squeeze him through. If a good, rich man, like the Young Ruler, cannot be saved we do not believe that anyone can. So we must get him in. If we are reminded that in the gospel days this story had to be taken literally, for one accepting Jesus then was compelled to leave all because Christians were cast out, ostracized and pauperized, we glibly reply that we no longer live in gospel days. Or else we declare that Jesus meant this complete renunciation for the Rich Young Ruler alone. Did he not accept Zacchaeus who surrendered but half his wealth? All the time we fail to see that what Jesus really asked of both was that they start sacrificing. Immediately we reply that money is the root of all good more than it is the root of all evil. We aim to get wealth for the good we intend to do. If we are then reminded that we "cannot serve God and mammon,"\* we retort that Jesus said did we but seek the Kingdom we should have all things added unto us. And all we are doing is making sure of these added things! But since when did Jesus allow men to pursue two ideals, the one generous and the other selfish? Recently a Bishop addressed a college body on this subject of the Rich Young Ruler. Elaborately he explained that Jesus' words to forego all wealth were of no application to his hearers. Just why he thought young America as represented by the college youths before him needed encouragement toward seeking a fortune is hard to perceive. Then he went on to interpret the incident as meaning that—in vague generalities—youth must cease from anything that may interfere with their spiritual development! What a blasphemy on those hard words of Jesus concerning the Young Ruler, "Only with God is it possible!"<sup>10</sup> Thus do we dilute the Bible to insipidity.

Of course we believe in sacrifice so long as it means but benevolence. But who believes it to the point of personal discomfort, and whoever carries it to the point of *self* denial? When have we seen a man deny his *self*? As to being "perfect

\* Matthew 6:24.

<sup>10</sup> See Matthew 19:26.

as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect," <sup>11</sup> what an absurdity to expect of frail humanity! So we whittle the Bible into nonsense. We interpret it down into something sane, safe, comfortable. Then we absurdly wonder why it never grips us or becomes life to us, and never transforms us, and why unbelievers scoff at us and it. The glory of the Bible is its vision of God, the struggles of its saints, and the challenge of its morals. It demands that men "think like God" and become perfect in impartial love "as your heavenly Father." But who observing us who profess the Bible, would suspect these things? The greatest need now is that we begin seriously and earnestly to live the Bible. We must shun no duty, shirk no ideal, trim no command. Until we live out the Bible to the last stern measure it requires with the last full measure of our devotion, the world will heed neither us nor the Book. But when we do there will come to us a new life that will make a new society, and the world will of itself begin to "seek out the Book of the Lord and read." And the Bible will become, in truth, the spiritual and ethical basis of life.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 5:48.

## XIV

### JESUS

WILLIAM HENRY BERNHARDT

THE Fourth Gospel contains a suggestive remark made by Jesus to Peter. The latter is told that in his youth he clothed himself and went wherever he desired, but when he shall have become old others will clothe him and take him whithersoever they wish. This statement has peculiar reference to Jesus himself. Assuming that during his life-time he was able to determine to some extent men's interpretation of his words and deeds, certainly after his death others clothed him with their interpretations and carried him, theoretically, whithersoever it pleased them.

The Christian preacher and theologian of every age has had before him the problems and needs of his day, and has used the life and message of Jesus in the endeavor to solve these problems and meet these needs. Even a casual reading of such volumes as *The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology*, by Hastings Rashdall, or *The History of Dogma*, the monumental work on the history of Christian thought by Adolph Harnack, detailing as these books do the long story of man's effort to make use most effectively of the life and death of Jesus, should convince one of the truth of this generalization. Every age has its peculiar needs—religious, ethical, and social, and the preacher-theologian has constantly sought to re-interpret the gospel inherited from his fathers so that it applied more effectively to the needs of his day.

This is true not merely of the doctrines concerning the life and message of Jesus but also with reference to every doctrine

integral to the Christian faith. Under the impulse of their religious needs, men have gone to the religious convictions of their social group seeking in them that which would aid them in their adjustment to the precarious elements in existence.

In order, then, to understand the significance of Jesus in the life and thought of the Christian Church in America today, and possibly tomorrow, it is necessary to discover, in part at least, the religious needs which the church seeks to meet, and which she must continue to meet. This will involve the effort to understand what is meant by religion, and what men conceive its basic function to be. From the vantage point thus gained, it will be possible to suggest a somewhat systematic organization of the theories contained in the plethora of books on Jesus which are pouring from the presses. Furthermore, it will give us a logic in terms of which to evaluate some of the theories proposed.

Another preliminary word seems necessary. It is possible to discover three elements in all religions which are more or less fully developed. The first is its essence or function. Men are interested in religion because they believe that in and through it they find values. The question as to whether or not religion has given to men what they expected of it is not pertinent here. It is sufficient for our purpose to note that in every age men have sought in religion for the values they believed were to be found in it. A second element in religion is intellectual. Men have sought to justify intellectually the effort made to achieve values religiously. To do this, they have found it necessary to re-interpret their own existence and the medium in which they found themselves. This re-interpretation of existence and the Existential Medium has sought to justify, in terms acceptable to the men of a given age, the acquisition and enjoyment of their religious values. Hence the growth of theologies and philosophies of religion among the more cultured people, and of mythologies among the more undeveloped. The third element involved in religion is some form of method or technique. By method or technique we have reference, of course, to "ways

of salvation." In our own religious evolution, the legalistic, ethical, and mystical ways have predominated. In such ways have we sought to make emotionally effective the function of religion.

It should be obvious immediately that a detailed analysis of the functional significance of Jesus would involve a study of the use made of his life and message with reference to each of these elements in religion. For our purpose, however, we shall use but one, the essence or function of religion, because this will enable us to understand the basic religious needs, and because it is here that the religious problem in America seems most acute today. We shall discuss three conceptions of religion and note what use is made of Jesus with reference to each.

## I

Confining ourselves to American Christianity, and more specifically, Protestant Christianity, we may distinguish three general conceptions of the function of religion. The first may be termed the Catholic conception, held not only by Roman Catholics, but also by a large group of Protestants. For them religion is concerned primarily with relating men to the Divine or Eternal Order and thereby saving them to eternal life. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" means for them not salvation from sickness, ignorance, or poverty. It means salvation from a lost or materio-temporal state to a blessed or spiritual-eternal state where neither sin, sorrow, nor death ever come. Basic to this view of the function of religion is a dualistic metaphysics characterized by a depreciation of temporal existence and a heightened appreciation of the Eternal. Heaven and earth are antithetical terms, and salvation is from earth to heaven. Sin is that which condemns us either to eternal punishment or to temporality, and salvation that which breaks the bonds of condemnation to such states. Religion, essentially or functionally, represents man's effort to escape from temporality with its evils to eternity with its goods.

According to this theory, the significance of Jesus is found



primarily in that element of religion called technique. By means of his incarnation he brought to men the Truth, and in his death he made possible their forgiveness or justification in the sight of God. According to one phase of this general position, that represented by J. Gresham Machen and those who believe with him, those who repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are assured of justification (acquittal or commendation) in the sight of God, and are thus assured of eternal life. This conception is stated clearly and concisely in Professor Machen's volume entitled *What Is Faith?*<sup>1</sup> After discussing the problem of the attainment of salvation through obedience to the Law, he concludes that while the theory is good, yet it is unworkable. There is, however, a way whereby men may stand justified before God. Even though we have sinned and thus deserve eternal death, in and through Jesus' assumption of our sins and by his death on the cross, he has satisfied the demands of the Law in our stead. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ we are able to stand before God even as Jesus is able to stand.

An Anglo-Catholic statement which differs somewhat in its details but is based upon the same type of conception of the function of religion is to be found in Charles Gore's volume, *Belief in Christ*.<sup>2</sup> Salvation for him is a divine process made possible through the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Christ whereby we are saved from this temporal to the eternal realm. The difference between this position and that of Professor Machen is to be found in the way whereby the saving work of Jesus relates one to the eternal realm. According to Machen and those who take his general position, the saving work of Jesus becomes individually effective as we accept it on faith. Thus the technique of salvation is intellectual. We believe the Gospel and are thereby saved, are clothed in the righteousness of Christ and enabled to stand before God without fear. The Anglo-Catholic, on the other hand, places his emphasis upon the In-

<sup>1</sup> Macmillan Company, New York, 1925. Pg. 164-165.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1924. Pg. 293.

carnation rather than upon the Revelation. As we participate in the sacraments we are participating in the Divine nature and are thus saved. This would seem to be logically more consistent than the theory presented by Professor Machen, who is using what Dean Mathews calls "political patterns" in defining the work of Jesus,<sup>3</sup> yet he is doing it in terms of a metaphysics inherited from the Greeks. With this metaphysics, the conception of a transubstantiation of human nature into divine is more consistent than is the use of acquittal which is a politico-forensic term.

According to this "Catholic" theory, held not only by Roman Catholics but also by great groups of American Protestants, the chief significance of Jesus is found in that he has made possible for them a "way of salvation." Prior to his advent men knew themselves unable to achieve it. His great work made possible for them what they sought,—salvation from sin and death, involving as these do the denial of eternal life with God. While Jesus made some contribution to what we have called interpretation, yet even this relates definitely to the technique of salvation.

A second clearly discernible conception of the function of religion has been made popular in England and America by the so-called Modernists of both lands. For them religion is primarily a way of generating ethical and social idealism. The end of existence is the development of ideal personalities in an ideal social order. Religion is the method whereby enthusiasm is generated for the achievement of such ideal personalities and a social order in which these ideal persons may live ideally. It is thus subsumed under character development and social reconstruction. Religion is at its best when it is helping us to remake our habits or is helping us to remake society, according to the primary interest of the theologian concerned.

According to this rather large group, made up of many smaller sub-groups, the significance of Jesus is found in two of

<sup>3</sup> Shailer Mathews, *The Atonement and the Social Process*, Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. Pg. 22f. and 89ff.

the three aspects of religion. In the first place, he helps them to understand the essence or function of religion itself. Many of them assume that traditional Christianity has failed to develop "the religion of Jesus." Thus Mr. Kirby Page begins his volume on *Jesus or Christianity: A Study in Contrasts*, by stating: "This volume is a study in *contrast*: divergencies between the religion of Jesus and organized Christianity." <sup>4</sup> And Professor Harry F. Ward, writing in the "World Tomorrow" for January, 1931, discusses "The Significance of Jesus in our Modern Age." In this article he ponders the question of the nature or function of religion as Christians shall conceive of it. Three possibilities are suggested, theology (or interpretation), worship (or technique), and the improvement of life. His conclusion is that religion's function should be the improvement of life.<sup>5</sup> For a large group of religious thinkers in England and America today, Jesus has become the authoritative founder of a new social religion which will have served its ends only when it has transformed society so that individuals may come to fullest self-realization. They thus make use of Jesus in determining the essence or function of religion.

At the same time, they are more concerned with the method whereby this ethical and social salvation is to become actualized. To this end great stress is laid upon the teachings and spirit of Jesus. When the "teachings of Jesus are applied" to our social, economic, political, and racial problems, and "his spirit" dominates the decisions and activities of men, the Kingdom of Righteousness will be realized. The significance of Jesus for this group of socio-ethical thinkers is thus two-fold: He points out to men the Good Life as the goal of religion, and then, in and through his teachings and spirit, shows them how this end may be realized for themselves and others.

For purposes of illustration, we may note briefly three well-known books in which the ethico-social interest predominates

<sup>4</sup> Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1929, Garden City, New York. Pg. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. his *Our Economic Morality and the Ethic of Jesus*, Macmillan, New York, 1929, and *Which Way Religion?* Macmillan, New York, 1931.

in varying degrees. Professor Edwin Lewis has discussed the significance of Jesus in two separate volumes.<sup>6</sup> He begins with a study of human nature and finds within man a moral ought. This moral ought in the conscience of man is recognized as absolute in the sense that it is the expression in man of an objectively valid moral law. Faced with the necessity of keeping this moral law, man discovers himself unable to do so. Jesus becomes man's saviour by virtue of the fact that he himself actually achieved moral perfection and is able therefore to help men to resolve the moral dilemma within. This is done by showing to men that love is the fulfilment of the whole law. Thus the individual who believes in the absoluteness of the truth of Jesus' message and fills his own life with love has found salvation, namely, realization of the character which God intended for him to have. Pursuing this principle a bit farther, Professor Lewis finds that love is productive of the "Family of God," or the new social order in which all men may come to fullest self-realization.<sup>7</sup>

Professor John Baillie presents an interpretation of the life and work of Jesus which belongs within the same general category.<sup>8</sup> The function of religion is conceived as primarily ethico-social in character. Enthusiasm for the ethical and social tasks is generated by the conviction in the mind of the religious man that as he participates in such activities he is aligning himself with the very heart and soul of the Eternal.<sup>9</sup> The significance of Jesus for Professor Baillie centers about "the redemptive love of God" revealed in and exemplified by him. Love is the most redemptive quality known to man, and in Jesus this finds full expression. Furthermore, Jesus points us to God who is the source of this redemptive love. And it is this redemptive love which frees men from the clutches of their evil past, and

<sup>6</sup> *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest*, Abingdon Press, 1924, and *A Manual of Christian Beliefs*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1927.

<sup>7</sup> Lewis, *Manual of Christian Beliefs*. Pg. 73-74.

<sup>8</sup> *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1929.

<sup>9</sup> *The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul*. Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., London, 1926. Pg. 110, 112, 113.

spurs them on to a better future. Thus Jesus, as the founder and heart of the Christian religion, is a positive ethico-social force according to Professor Baillie.<sup>10</sup>

One of the best statements of the more social significance of Jesus is that presented by Dean Shailer Mathews in his recent volume, *The Atonement and the Social Process*. Developing his thesis that the church has always used "social patterns" in making doctrines functionally significant, he reaches the conclusion that the most useful pattern for our day is that of organic process. We are involved, according to Dean Mathews, in a process in which there are vast personality-producing forces. Men relate themselves to these forces in various ways, personal and impersonal. Religion represents man's effort to relate himself personally to these personality-producing forces in help-receiving ways, while science and common sense are ways whereby men cooperate impersonally. Jesus, by bringing to the attention of men the direction in which the process is moving, and the method whereby men may cooperate personally, becomes the founder and leader of the movement for greater personalities in a more humane social order. Religion is thus ethico-social in its function, and Jesus is significant to the extent that he contributes to this function.<sup>11</sup>

The contribution which Jesus has made to human life is stated rather specifically by Dean Mathews. He insists that the realization of highest human ends is possible only as men relate themselves not only impersonally, but also personally with the Cosmic Process. "Living personally" with the process means living "with the sacrificial social-mindedness of Jesus."<sup>12</sup> Thus Jesus, if he did not actually introduce into human thought two great ideas, yet certainly made men realize them in a manner hitherto unknown. The first of these was the conviction that God is fundamentally a God of love. This is his highest and

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*. Chapters III and VIII.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. "The Forum" for February, 1931, in which appears an article by Dean Mathews on *Religion in the New Age*. Pg. 98-103.

<sup>12</sup> *The Atonement and the Social Process*. Pg. 208.

most characteristic attribute. The second is really a corollary of the first, namely, that the most effective method in our human relationships is the method of love, of "sacrificial social-mindedness" like unto that of Jesus. And, whenever men are ready to make these two ideas beliefs, i.e., patterns of action of whose truth one is sufficiently convinced to test them out, we shall be on the way toward the Better Days ahead.

There are many other statements of this general conception of the significance of Jesus Christ in American Christianity. Some of them remain much closer to the position termed Catholic than others. Through all of them, however, there runs at least one common element, namely, that basic to them is the conception of the function of religion as primarily ethico-social in character.

The two general conceptions just discussed, namely one which views religion as a way of relating men to an Eternal Order or Majesty, and the second which subsumes religion under the task of social and ethical regeneration and reconstruction, are very widely held among American Protestant Christians. Their adherents make up probably the major portion of the members of the various Protestant bodies. There is, however, a third conception of the function of religion and the significance of Jesus Christ for those who are not wholly satisfied with either of these positions and who are still less satisfied with the Ecclesiastical Humanism so vocal in the press of today.

This third conception of the function of religion would make it more specific and unique than the ethico-social point of view and more in harmony with the modern mind than the Catholic conception. Its primary thesis is that religion is more concerned with precarious or non-manipulable aspects of existence than with those which are more stable and controllable. It begins with the analysis of existence suggested by John Dewey in *Experience and Nature*, in which he divides existence into the stable and the precarious.<sup>13</sup> By this he means that existence for us is in part regular, orderly, and stable, and in part neither

<sup>13</sup> The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill., 1926. Pg. 40ff.

orderly, regular, nor stable. That which is regular, orderly and stable is subject to control, to manipulation in our interests and for our purposes. The precarious, or irregular, unstable and non-predictable elements or phases of existence are not subject to such manipulative control. To them we must submit, at least so far as present knowledge is concerned.

Mr. Dewey insists that it is the presence of the unstable and precarious which is responsible for present-day civilization. It was the presence of the unforeseen factors which compelled men to reflect, to plan, and to remake their habitual responses. This analysis may be carried a bit farther than is here done by Mr. Dewey, and we may state that it is the presence of the precarious, uncontrollable elements or phases of existence which is responsible for the rise and continuance of religion.

Human existence may thus be divided into manipulative and non-manipulative aspects or phases. By the manipulative we would designate the whole realm in which our activities are productive of values such as food, clothing, shelter, safety, recreation and culture. This includes the whole of our industrial system which enables us to provide, in quantities and qualities largely determinable by us, the material basis of life. We have learned, through somewhat devious ways, that the material basis of life must be obtained, if at all, by means of more or less intelligent activity. Within this same realm of existence must be placed our social machinery, from the primary school to the universities and institutions of research; from the law-making and law-enforcing bodies in our smallest political areas to the national Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Presidency. We have learned that if our collective life is to be at all happy we must be not only somewhat intelligent in our social rule-making but we must also train our children, of all ages, in those virtues which make any high type of social existence possible and possibly progressive. Thus character education is rapidly becoming a more integral part of our social task, and belongs fundamentally within the realm of the manipulable. Many city school systems are carrying on experiments

in this connection and are rapidly developing a workable technique.<sup>14</sup> Thus the satisfaction of our physical, social, and even many of our personal needs belongs to the manipulative side of life. Experts are engaged in discovering and charting the customary ways in which these values may be achieved. Such men, from the mining and agricultural experts to the psychologists and social engineers, are busily engaged in charting "the stable aspects of existence" to the end that we may use their charts for the more efficient satisfaction of our needs.

At the same time, whether we like it or not, there are phases of existence not subject to such manipulative control, at least, so far as our present knowledge is concerned. We face certain things which are non-manipulative, uncontrollable, precarious, and before them some form of human adjustment seems inevitable. The most obvious of these is death. No matter what we may do by way of achieving values—material, social, or personal, there still faces us this bracing fact: eventually death releases our grip upon them, and so far as existence here is concerned, they are lost. Death is thus one of the most obvious of the non-manipulable elements in existence to which submission seems one's only recourse at present.

A second illustration of the non-manipulable or precarious phase of existence is ignorance. Leibniz, who died in 1716 A.D., is said to have been the last man who knew all there was to be known in his day. But today we are aware of the fact that what was known in Leibniz's day was but a fraction of what is knowable now, and what fraction of all possible knowledge the sum-total we have today represents, no one is able even to guess. Yet Leibniz was forced to make decisions which determined his own life, and the lives of those closely related to him, on the basis of his partial knowledge. He had to answer questions and make decisions which could only be done rightly in the light of knowledge undreamed of by him, as well as by

<sup>14</sup> The Denver, Colorado, Public School System is engaged rather actively in character educational research. Monograph 14, published by this system, describes in some detail their findings and aims.



us. So with men of this "enlightened age." Conclusions must be reached and decisions made which determine not merely the course of individual lives, but the destinies of nations as well, and all on the basis of admittedly partial knowledge. Philosopher and teacher, preacher and priest, answer daily the questions of men and women concerning the meaning of pain, of evil, of life and death. Yet they are compelled to do so, realizing in most cases, that the data upon which they base their conclusions are incomplete and inadequate. Ignorance, apparently, is one of the things to which mankind must adjust itself.

It may be objected that by study and education we shall finally eliminate ignorance. It is a defensible thesis that study and education are processes whereby one becomes increasingly ignorant. Through study and research we are daily uncovering vast fields of possible knowledge of which the world one thousand years ago was totally unaware. Every time we discover a new fact we add a bit more of mystery to our present store. Mr. John Dewey quotes Herbert Spencer to the effect that every fact has two sides, one its near and known side and the other its remote and unknown side, and concludes by saying that Spencer has here called attention to a persistent trait with reference to all knowledge.<sup>15</sup> "We know in part" is true of every phase of human existence. The multiplicity of things we are learning about our world and ourselves makes it possible for us to transcend time and space on this planet more readily, but they are also adding greatly to the complexity of existence and the Existential Medium as a whole. Thus the answers to the questions of ultimate meaning are made so much more difficult. We are living in a world which we know in part, making decisions for the future world, of which we are mostly in ignorance. Thus ignorance would seem to be one of life's inevitables to which some form of hopeful adjustment must be made.

A third illustration of this thesis may be suggested. Professor W. E. Hocking, writing in *Human Nature and Its Remaking*,

<sup>15</sup> *Experience and Nature*. Pg. 43.

identifies the Self with the "Will-to-power."<sup>16</sup> Each individual seeks to develop his own will-to-power over others and the world about him to the farthest extent. This seems to be an inherent tendency. Yet with existence as it is, in a world limited in many ways, both physical and social, each self must be sacrificed to some extent. The difficulties which grow out of this self-centering tendency on the part of every individual to organize all of life about himself are seen when one views the tragedies of 1914-1918, the economic struggle in heightened form following the stock-market debacle of October, 1929, and the grasping politics of so many large American cities. Our world is such that every individual faces the necessity of sacrificing some of his desires, some of his wishes, some of the experiences which might add to the development of his personality. Sacrifice of self seems to be inherent in the scheme of things as we have come to understand it.

Furthermore, in such a peaceful place as the home, this necessity for vital sacrifice is also present. Children are the object and the joy of the home, yet parentage involves countless sacrifices. Pleasures, cultural advantages, reading, better physical equipment—all must be sacrificed to some extent if children are to be born and reared successfully. And finally, when much of the parents' life has been organized about the children of the home, these same children leave to begin the human adventure for themselves. This leaves the personalities which have been organized about them with little opportunity for expression or development. Thus in countless houses the world over old folks sit awaiting death. Their reason for existence is gone. The personalities built up about their children, foundationed upon the sacrifice of their own desires and ambitions, have been deprived of the stimulus to expression and growth. When the last child has gone, too often the parents are left like old hulks decaying in some deserted harbor. Certainly there are sacrifices involved in our social life which are as inevitable and unescapable

<sup>16</sup> Yale University Press, New Haven, new and revised edition, 1923, Chapter XI.

as the rise of the sun in the morning and the call of the Gray Angel when the hour-glass of life has run.

These three precarious elements involved in human existence at present are suggestive of the realm in which religion makes its unique contribution. There is, however, another phase of our existence which is likewise non-manipulative, although in a somewhat different sense from those mentioned above. We refer here to the cosmic process whose progeny we are, which excites our fancy, stimulates our imagination, and ultimately crushes us. Rudolph Otto speaks of this as "The Numinous," Schleiermacher had this in mind when he defined religion as the feeling of absolute dependence, the late Gerald Birney Smith spoke of this as "that in the universe which evokes awe," and a recent book by Professor Oskar Bauhofer, *Das Metareligiöse*, while its interpretation differs quite radically from what we refer to, yet brings to the fore the element in our Existential Medium of which we here speak.<sup>17</sup> We find ourselves face to face, in times of contemplation, with a Medium in the midst of which we have our existence which has the capacity of evoking from us the deepest feelings of awe. These experiences usually come to the individual when alone, when something has forced in upon his attention the relative size of this minutia which is himself and the enormously vast Medium about him.

Under such conditions he understands in some measure the feeling of utter helplessness which evoked from Paul the cry: "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"<sup>18</sup> God, as a re-interpretation of the Existential Medium, is the supreme uncontrollable fact in human existence. Eventually each individual must come to some terms with God, and the choice is not left wholly to men!

The non-manipulative, then, would seem to be part of the experience of every normal individual, no matter what his cultural or scientific level of life may be. For the great mass

<sup>17</sup> Oskar Bauhofer, *Das Metareligiöse*, Leipzig, J. C. Hinrichs, 1930. Cf. review of volume by A. C. Knudson, *The Methodist Review*, New York, September-October, 1930. Pg. 777f.

<sup>18</sup> Romans 7:24. American Revised Version.

of folk today, and for all folk of the distant past, much more of existence was precarious than is suggested here. In the period covered by the Old and New Testaments, practically all of life was non-manipulable in our present sense. This means that for them religion covered much more of life than it does for the intelligent individual today. Religion has ever been concerned with a quest for vital values not achievable by men themselves. Even a rather cursory sketch through such a volume as that of S. Angus, *The Religious Quests of the Greco-Roman World*,<sup>19</sup> which gives in some detail the values sought by men in and through religion will give weight to the statement just made, namely, that in religion men seek and have always sought for those values which are highly significant for existence itself, and which are of such nature that men could not procure them by the ordinary means. Religion thus finds its unique sphere in the realm of the precarious, the uncontrollable, the non-manipulable phases of existence. It may thus be defined as man's effort to adjust himself hopefully to the precarious aspects of existence. Faced with the inevitable loss of values, some form of hopeful adjustment seems necessary. Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, facing the Cross, prayed three times that the cross might be evaded. To the three prayers, however, he added these significant words: "My father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done."<sup>20</sup> According to the record in the Gospels, he left the Garden empowered to meet his tormentors and death with a conquering faith. Although the prayers which he formulated and uttered sought for changes to occur in that which was objective to him, namely, the plans and purposes of his enemies, the results obtained from his prayers were primarily subjective, the power to submit hopefully and courageously to the inevitable which he had interpreted as the Father's will. From this third point of view, therefore, religion may be defined as man's effort to meet the non-manipulable phases of existence hopefully through

<sup>19</sup> Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1929.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 26:42. American Revised Version.

a re-interpretation of existence and the Existential Medium, and by means of some technique.

The significance of Jesus with this conception of the function or essence of religion is confined primarily to the element called technique. We noted above that religion has three elements or aspects: function, interpretation, and technique or method. The religious problem of today, while formally the same as that in the ancient world, is materially quite different. The conception of an orderly nature and some knowledge of its stable aspects enable the modern man to satisfy many of his wants with little reference to religion or God. Thus we have little reason to expect great contributions from the ancient world toward this first element in religion. Furthermore, there is little evidence for the belief that the nature or function of religion occupied the attention of Jesus to any great degree. The same thing may be said concerning the interpretative or theological aspects of religion. Professor A. C. McGiffert, in the following paragraph, presents in a more striking way perhaps, what is the conclusion of many scholars concerning Jesus' theological interests:

"Jesus was a devout and loyal Jew, and the God whom he worshipped was the God of his people Israel—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was not a theologian or a philosopher, and he indulged in no speculations touching the nature and character of God. So far as we can judge from the Synoptic Gospels and from his attitude reflected there, he did not regard it as his mission to promulgate a new God or to teach new ideas about God, but rather to summon his fellows to live as God—his God and theirs—would have them live."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *The God of the Early Christians*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1924. Pg. 3. Compare also G. B. Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*. Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1905, pg. 65f., Paul Wernle, *Jesus*. Tübingen, 1917, pg. 41-101; H. F. Rall, "The Teaching of Jesus," in the *Abingdon Commentary*, Abingdon Press, New York, 1929. Pg. 906-907; E. F. Scott, *The Gospel and Its Tributaries*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1928, chapter III, in which it is suggested that Jesus vitalized rather than changed the idea of God. Shailer Mathews, *The Faith of Modernism*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1925. Pg. 123ff., where the primary place in the purpose of Jesus is given to technique rather than to theology proper. Compare also J. Moffatt, *The Theology of the Gospels*. Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1913, chapter III.

It was with reference to the "way of salvation" that Jesus spoke most earnestly and convincingly. The Sermon on the Mount indicates his interest in the activities of men as related to the Coming Kingdom. Paul's conflicts with the Judaizers over the significance of the law as a prerequisite for entrance into the Kingdom likewise indicates the issue between the old and the new religions. It is this phase of the work of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament which is of primary significance to those who hold this third conception of the function of religion. The question with which they approach the New Testament is this: How did Jesus meet the precarious aspects of existence so as to transcend them hopefully?

The manner in which Jesus met the non-manipulable phases of life, as pictured for us in much recent theological literature, is comparatively simple. We may present it in terms of the analysis of religion suggested in the preceding pages. We note first that for the men of Jesus' day much more of life was non-manipulable than is the case today. Such careful scholars as W. Morgan,<sup>22</sup> S. J. Case,<sup>23</sup> and E. F. Scott,<sup>24</sup> are of the opinion that most of life for men of the early Christian period was under the control of supernatural powers, and for that reason non-manipulable in the ordinary sense of the term. The conception of natural law, in terms of which our manipulative techniques are made possible, was then unknown. Common sense existed, of course, then as now, and much of the ordinary course of life was controlled in terms of it. At the same time, every important event or experience involved the complicity of some supernatural agency. Thus the distinction between the manipulable and the non-manipulable, which we made above, cannot be said to have existed in the early days. For the men of that age, all of life was under the control of superpersonal powers,

<sup>22</sup> Cf. W. Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1917, part I.

<sup>23</sup> S. J. Case, *Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times*, The Century Company, New York and London, 1929.

<sup>24</sup> "The Supernatural in Early Christianity," *Journal of Religion*, Jan., 1920. Pg. 95-106. Cf. also, Canon G. H. Box, *Abingdon Bible Commentary*, Abingdon Press, New York, 1929. Pg. 839-852.

and men had to appeal to God for all of their values. Thus for them religion functioned in the achievement of life, and of life abundant in all of its ramifications.

This appeal to God for all one needed was decidedly natural for one who held to the conception of God presented in the Gospels. In Jesus we discover a profound faith in the power and goodness of God, the Father. It was this faith in God as Father which evoked from Jesus the response of "sheer devotion, humble confidence, and a contentment with Him which rests in Him unflinchingly as our End and All."<sup>25</sup> Without attempting any comment on the additions to the conception of God for which Jesus may have been responsible, this one fact seems undeniable: He added *belief* to the common conception of his contemporaries; belief in the sense of a "conviction favorable to action."<sup>26</sup> Under the impulse of his religious experience, Jesus re-interpreted his Existential Medium in terms of the Jewish conception of God at its highest and best, and in this God he believed profoundly. Such belief made positive action possible and inevitable.

This trust in and reverence for God the Father had two corollaries for Jesus which are pertinent to our problem. The first was a rather deep life of prayer and communion. The Gospels give us many references to this Life-with-God which seems to have been as natural for Jesus as was his life of aggressive good-will toward his fellows.<sup>27</sup> The second corollary deduced by Jesus from his conception of God was a conviction of the brotherhood of the children of the Father, and the necessity devolving upon those who believed in the Fatherhood of God to take the attitude of aggressive good-will toward the Father's children.<sup>28</sup> Professor Walter E. Bundy, in *Our Recovery of Jesus*, has caught in one brief sentence the essence of Jesus' reli-

<sup>25</sup> Moffatt, J., *Love in the New Testament*, R. R. Smith, Inc., New York, 1930. Pg. 95.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. McClure, M. T., *An Introduction to the Logic of Reflection*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1925. Pg. 55.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Friedrich Heiler, *Das Gebet*. München, 1923, Ernst Reinhardt. Pg. 239.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Mark 12:30-31.

gious technique: "His supreme aspiration is religious—the discovery and performance of the divine will." <sup>29</sup>

Conceiving of religion as concerned primarily with a hopeful adjustment to the precarious aspects of existence, we may use the method of Jesus as a basis for religious experimentation. Granting that we have not sufficient evidence to prove beyond a doubt that this is the type of world we wish it to be; granting that perhaps our conceptions of the significance of human personality and the interest of God in the human life of this insignificant planet may be somewhat optimistic, we yet ask this question: What happens in human life when men take the attitude we have described as Jesus' attitude toward God and their fellows? Is it a fact that the religious self, "the Life of Religion" or fellowship with God becomes real and of intrinsic worth? Is it true that one is able to meet the uncontrollable, the precarious, the non-manipulative to which we seemed compelled to submit, much more hopefully than those who do not make this personal experiment? The story of Christian biography would seem to answer these questions in the affirmative.

The individuals who "meet the unseen" and unforeseen with the attitude suggested discover that values of two kinds accrue to them. There is first of all an intrinsic value, which may be called "The Life of Religion" or the development of a religious self analogous to the rational, social, moral, or æsthetic "self." This "religious self" is an element in all fully developed personalities which have risen beyond the physical, rational, and social level. The pæans of joy found in the writings of the mystics and great religious souls of all ages and among all peoples indicate the intrinsic value of this religious self. The second type of values is instrumental—the satisfaction and peace which come to him who can meet the precarious with confidence, courage, and equanimity; who is able to say "I have overcome the world."

Thus for those who define religion in terms of the effort to adjust one's self hopefully to the non-manipulative phases of

<sup>29</sup> Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, Ind., 1929. Pg. 256.



existence through a re-interpretation of existence and the Existential Medium and by means of some technique, the primary significance of Jesus is to be found in his own discovery and practice of a technique which proved highly satisfactory to him. Accepting as a basis for experimentation his trust and reverence for God, his aggressive good-will toward his fellows, and the life of prayer and mysticism, they seek to reproduce in their own lives the values they believe they discover in his. For them, Jesus is highly suggestive and encouraging. His experience, as they understand it, is suggestive of what is possible for others who face situations similar to those he faced. It is likewise an encouragement and stimulus to them to seek for themselves and persistently to pursue a technique which will make similar religious values theirs.

## II

Since our concern is not merely with a survey of the present situation but also with somewhat of a forecast, it is necessary for us to examine the views presented in the effort to determine their relative fitness for survival. The exigencies of space forbid any extended evaluation, but some of the more important considerations may be presented in summary fashion.

Concerning the first general classification, namely, that which includes those conceptions of the work of Jesus based upon the traditional metaphysics, it is not necessary to say much. The impact of modern science and of much recent philosophy is driving students to the conclusion that there is but one realm of reality, and that the attempt to divorce our present realm from some other higher or qualitatively different realm, as Karl Barth would seem to do and as the Catholic philosophy has always done, becomes increasingly difficult. The writings of such scholars as Alfred North Whitehead, C. Lloyd Morgan, Jan C. Smuts, and others, move definitely toward a conception of God within rather than without the Cosmos. In American Protestantism, this movement has been under way for more than half a century. Prior to the days of George Trumbull Ladd

and Borden Parker Bowne, the conception of God which was widely held in our country may be termed Absolute Transcendence. God was external to the cosmos, and interfered only on special occasions. With the work of these two men, this conception of Absolute Transcendence was transformed into Theism, which conceives of God as personally immanent with reference to the cosmos. God was above and beyond, but also within the world. This movement has continued until its logical conclusion seems to have been reached in the more recent conceptions. The conception of God which is becoming more and more prevalent may be termed Absolute Immanence. God is conceived of as the Father of Creative Synthesis at work within the Cosmos and man, at once the source and sustainer of our values and the Object of devotion and trust. Suggestive of this trend are the works of Dean Shailer Mathews,<sup>30</sup> Henry N. Wieman,<sup>31</sup> and Walter M. Horton in the first part of *Theism and the Modern Mood*.<sup>32</sup> This tendency is discoverable particularly in the writings of those whose interests follow the organic trend in recent philosophy. The tendency is toward a disavowal of access to and knowledge of any realm external to the cosmic process defined in its widest terms, and a heightened appreciation of the God within man and the vast cosmic reaches.

Obviously, this change in the conception of God will have its effect upon methods of salvation. The conception of supernaturally revealed Laws and Truths whose disobedience or disbelief involves eternal punishment is hardly congruous with this metaphysics. So also is the case with respect to those conceptions of the work of Jesus which make it primarily a matter of the transubstantiation of human nature into divine by means of

<sup>30</sup> *Contributions of Science to Religion*, D. Appleton and Company, New York and London, 1924. Pg. 1-13. Cf. also *The Atonement and the Social Process*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1930. Pg. 182-7.

<sup>31</sup> *The Issues of Life*, Abingdon Press, New York, 1930. Pg. 157ff. *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1927. Pg. 179-190.

<sup>32</sup> Harper and Brothers, New York, 1930, compare pg. 117. Compare also W. K. Wright, *Student's Philosophy of Religion*, Macmillan Company, New York, 1927. Pg. 373-376.

the sacraments. These conceptions are logically contradictory to the conception of God toward which we seem definitely to be moving. And in so far as that is the case, these conceptions of the function of religion and the significance of Jesus will become increasingly untenable and unimportant.

The conception of religion termed ethico-social from the point of view of function and the conception of Jesus which is integral to it have a much better chance for survival in the days ahead. However, there are some considerations which demand attention and which suggest that this, too, is a passing conception. Under the category "ethico-social" we really have two conceptions of the function of religion and the significance of Jesus. Ultimately they are one, but they start from opposite poles. One begins with the ethical interest as primary and the other makes the social interest basic. The goal in both cases, however, is better individuals in a better social order. For purposes of evaluation, however, we shall separate them.

The more specifically ethical interest, such as that of Professor Lewis, begins with a moral ought resident within, an ought whose demands we are unable to meet. This results in an inner conflict which must be resolved before ethical growth is possible to the extent that we desire, and before the "Family of God" is realizable here. The significance of Jesus is found in the resolution of this inner conflict which we find in his own realization of moral perfection and his suggestion of a way whereby such achievement is possible to others. Granting that those who take this position are not bound by the dualistic metaphysics basic to the position called "Catholic" above, yet there seems to remain with them the basic framework of the politico-forensic theology. The "moral ought" seems to be but another name for the supernaturally revealed "Will of God" which men, as Paul suggested, were unable to obey. The sense of sin which is the heart of the "inner conflict" is another way of bringing into current theology the "corruption" of human nature so familiar to students of the traditional doctrines. In so far, therefore, as this conception of the significance of Jesus

partakes of the nature of the "Catholic" and traditional theology, it falls under the condemnation of historic advance along with that position.

The patterns in theological thought are changing rather rapidly from the politico-forensic to the biological fields, and we find men agreeing with Professor C. Lloyd Morgan that sin is a disintegration at a given level of existence and a re-integration at a lower level, rather than thinking of it in terms of the disobedience of some "law."<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the implications of personalistic theism with reference to sin are being exposed by other writers, such as Frank Kingdon, *Humane Religion*, who discovers that for Jesus all sins were ethical.<sup>34</sup> Thus the emphasis on sin in American Protestantism is moving from the conception of it as a disobedience of the laws of a Divine Lawgiver to one which sees it as a betrayal of a life-situation in which, for the ethico-social theologians, the ethical implications predominate. It would appear, therefore, that with the increasing domination of our thought by biological and democratic concepts, the attempt to cling to the older politico-forensic patterns, whether it be done consciously or not, will become increasingly unsatisfactory.

The tendency, however, in the more progressive theological circles, is swinging toward the social emphasis in this ethico-social approach. Odd as it may seem, there has been a surprising dearth of critical evaluation of this social gospel by liberal religious thinkers. A recent volume by C. E. M. Joad, *The Present and Future of Religion*,<sup>35</sup> contains a searching criticism of this attempt to subsume religion under ethico-social idealism. Mr. Joad insists that this attempt to make religion a champion of social progress and intellectual enlightenment represents too radical a break with the whole history of Christianity, and is therefore futile. Christianity, according to him, has been as much a drag on progress historically as it has been a stimulus

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J. W. Nixon, *An Emerging Christian Faith*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1930. Pg. 50-51.

<sup>34</sup> Abingdon Press, New York and Cincinnati, 1930. Pg. 55ff.

<sup>35</sup> The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930.

and its present record is little better. His conclusion is that if this represents the whole gospel of Modernism, its exponents face utter disillusionment.

Several other considerations demand attention with reference to this effort to identify religion and ethics or sociology so far as function is concerned. The first is that while the Christian Church is a large and influential organization, yet it is but one of the many social organizations comprising our society. For it to attempt to pre-empt for itself the task of generating social idealism for the whole of society is a bit ambitious, and dangerous. The ethico-social task facing us today is too large for any one group, no matter how idealistic it may be. This demands the widest and most powerful instrumentalities of social change we have, namely, our educational and political institutions. It would be a social calamity of no small caliber if society ever relegated to one organization, such as the church, the whole task of generating idealism and enthusiasm for the task of social reconstruction.

A second consideration is involved in the training received by the ministry of today. The training received by the minister today is not one which fits him for the task here contemplated. Ethics is taught in most ministerial training schools, but the student seldom gets more than one or two courses in this out of the required 27 or 30. Such general fields as sociology, economics, political science, and social psychology, if taught at all, are usually taught rather sketchily for the reason that the curriculum is not built about them. Yet these are basic fields with the conception of religion as that of generating enthusiasm which is intelligent for the reconstruction of individual and social life. Thirdly, should the church change the character of its education for the ministry, and make personality specialists and social reformers of its pastors and preachers, what institution is there which would minister to what have been the unique religious needs of men to which the church ministered before Canon Freemantle and some other social prophets awakened the church to some of the social implications of its mes-

sage? If the church becomes an institution duplicating the program of character education and socialization being rapidly developed in our public educational systems, the basic needs of men satisfied by the church in the past will apparently have to go unsatisfied. Some men, at least, believe this would be an unfortunate situation.

Finally, if it be insisted that men have no religious needs other than these ethico-social needs, another difficulty presents itself. The Ecclesiastical Humanist insists that man's needs on this level are ethico-social in character, and that religion is but an attempted "short-cut" to the satisfaction of these needs. And he insists that this "short-cut" is a delusion; that the ethico-social values must be achieved in terms of what we have called the manipulative technique. Therefore, he states triumphantly, the values you seek are attainable in terms of science and common-sense without any recourse to an elaborate theology. As pointed out above, in terms of character education and socialization programs, it is possible to realize many of the values included in the list of the ethico-social preacher and theologian. During the war, likewise, it was clearly demonstrated that there are emotional possibilities tied up within patriotism which may be utilized in the interest of an intelligent social idealism when the same educational institutions are focused on them which were used during the war. A careful study of the Russian situation today might reveal the same thing. And finally, it is not too wild a thing to hope that these agencies, with a carefully regulated eugenic program, may some day develop a race of folk as social as the ants, which apparently have no egoistic impulses whatever.<sup>36</sup>

The extreme emphasis upon the ethico-social function of religion would seem to leave its protagonists facing a dilemma. If they continue to insist upon this as their primary task, they face the pointed invitations of educators, sociologists, economists, and others to leave their theology and take up the more

<sup>36</sup> Compare Lafcadio Hearn, quoted in J. A. Hobson, *Economics and Ethics*. D. C. Heath Co., Boston, New York, etc., 1929. Pg. 54-55.

secular tasks of character education and social reform in as scientific a manner as possible. Logically, there appears to be no adequate reason for refusing the invitation. If character education and social reform are possible without the elaborate theology and techniques of the church, and evidence is piling up that such things are possible, then the defenders of this theory of religion face a dilemma. They are mistaken as to the function of religion or as to the necessity of theology and technique. If it be the function of religion to develop character and to reform society, the secular institutions appear to be better fitted to do the task than the Church, and the Church must rapidly become extinct or change into a secular institution. If the Church with its theology and technique is to continue, then it would appear necessary for it to determine its unique function, something which justifies its continued existence.

Our conclusion is that even as religion in the past had its unique place in the life and interests of men in that it aided them to meet those difficulties which were tied up with the non-manipulable aspects of existence and likewise aided them to discover God with the intrinsic values inherent in that discovery, so today the church must discover the unique contribution which it may make to the lives of the men of the New Enlightenment. Furthermore, it must develop interpretations and techniques which are in harmony with the ruling philosophies of our day and which are psychologically effective for those trained in the cultural and scientific institutions of today and the immediate future. And in this specific attempt to meet the religious needs of men, the life and message of Jesus will undoubtedly make their contribution as they have in the days of the past.





C

THE METHOD OF ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY



## XV

### BUILDING THE HOUSE OF GOD

ELBERT M. CONOVER

#### *The Progress of American Church Architecture*

TODAY the House of God must be much more than a chapel or meeting house. The extension of the ministry of Christ into all phases of human living, requires a building that is enlarged horizontally. The modern church edifice erected for the ministries of worship, religious education and Christian fellowship and service, typifies the endeavor through Christianity to minister to and sanctify life in all its varied and complex phases.

#### *Church Building in the United States of America*

Ninety-five per cent of the building and equipment structure of American Protestantism is inefficient for the ministry expected of the church today and for the program of service and activities to which the church itself is committed.

The course of church building in America has not resulted from an orderly evolution but represents a distinct break with the progressive and rational growth of church architecture in Europe. In a raw and new country bounded with unbroken forests and untrodden frontiers, such church buildings as were erected were designed to shelter simple religious activities by which an attempt was made to cope with primitive conditions. In many of the colonies, life in the new country was not only a divorcement from Europe's material achievements but a reaction to European culture.

The colonial meeting houses were simply shelter places for congregations gathered to pray and to hear preaching. The

colonial Protestant Episcopal churches in many instances did follow English precedents in their physical structure. But good examples were few and so widely scattered that they wielded little or no measurable influence upon the general architectural aspect of the colonial churches.

During the colonial period, church architecture was at a low ebb in England. The Renaissance and Italian influence was dominating through the forceful Christopher Wren who could see nothing admirable in the church architecture that he called by the then derogatory term "Gothic." He rebuilt St. Paul's Cathedral in London in a mixture of Classic and Renaissance motifs. His powerful influence swept into the British colonies and gave us the Georgian meeting houses. Even the Church of England followed that type for a period here as they did in London—for example: Christ Church, Philadelphia, 1727; St. Paul's, New York, 1767, and St. Michael, Charleston, 1752.

This gloomy picture was relieved only in spots. The attempted Gothic revival from about 1840 to 1870 gave us some notable edifices such as Trinity Protestant Episcopal, New York, 1839; Grace Protestant Episcopal, New York, 1845. But these churches were not planned for an educational or social ministry. In the non-liturgical groups they were still glorified "preaching houses."

Due to the strong influence of H. H. Richardson, an individualistic type of Romanesque came into vogue, an outstanding example being Trinity Episcopal Church, Boston, 1877. Richardson was followed by many imitators who gave us numerous churches with heavy round door and window headings, thick walls and heavy masses. This architecture has a massive and powerful appearance but lacked the inspiration and emotional stimulation of the vertical line and the pointed arch.

One reason for the woeful condition of church building in America lies in the fact that architectural education is only a recent acquisition with us. Even now architectural training schools sadly neglect the progress and needs of the church. One architectural college in recent years offered what they

termed three church problems: a circular chapel for a millionaire's estate, a Jewish synagogue and a community mausoleum! American architectural education today is largely controlled by influences that give little or no consideration to a Christian expression in architecture.

### *Recent Advances in American Church Architecture*

The best of recent American church architecture is notably significant and excels modern church architecture in other parts of the world. During the past ten years, more progress has been made toward a more excellent church architecture in our country than during the entire previous history of the nation. This is due to the excellent leadership of a small number of architects who individually have given sincere, devoted and thoughtful attention to the highly important enterprise of building the House of God. This recent notable improvement has been stimulated and in many instances led by the commissions, bureaus or departments of church architecture set up by several denominations.

### *The Churches' Lack of Concern for Physical Equipment*

The churches themselves have to a surprising degree shown little concern for planning suitable and adequate buildings. A tremendous amount of talent and treasure have been expended by Protestant denominations in America for the advancement of programs, religious educational curricula and the improvement of methods, but a comparatively insignificant amount of time and talent have been expended by any denominational body to secure a co-extensive development of the physical equipment. Consequently we see today in all the Protestant churches a greatly advanced position in matters of program and curricula but an insignificant advance in the improvement of the physical equipment. Consequently efforts to improve the program of the churches, particularly of the religious educational departments, are nullified by the absence of the building equipment essential to make the program effective, or even to permit of its

being adopted in thousands of local churches. One denomination alone has more than ten thousand one-room structures. Many of these are located beside excellently designed and equipped public school buildings. Even the denominations that do have an established architectural leadership weaken this through lack of any power to control the actions of the local church. The congregations are left free to spend money contributed for the work of the church in a most unwise manner. Many buildings erected in recent years hamper rather than promote the Christian movement.

### *The Result of an Individualistic Program*

Until recently the growth of the church was based on a preaching program directed to an individualistic appeal. Ministers were not trained to direct an educational ministry but were sent out merely as preachers. This, of course, has been reflected in the physical equipment of the denominations with the result that most of it is wholly unsuited for the ministry of teaching and special service. Even the conduct of worship has been left to the caprice of the itinerant individual ministers, there being little, if any, definite guidance to facilitate the administration of the sacraments and the effective conducting of services of worship.

### *The Present Stage of Transition*

There are grounds for hope that at present we are at a point of departure from the accumulation of inadequate and unsuited church buildings. It is commonly recognized that the present physical structure of the churches is almost totally inefficient. The appreciation of this fact may be considered a gain. In a list of the vast number of obsolete church buildings must be included many structures costing more than a million dollars in which the sanctuary is a modified theatre and in which there are schoolrooms where as many as twenty-four teachers' voices are sounding at the same time in the same room.

By programs of rebuilding and remodeling much of the

equity in some of the existing church structures can be salvaged, but the equipment erected by a frontier civilization and planned for an individualistic and self-centered, newly rich but uncultured population must, to a great extent, be discarded. A long time will be required, however, to scrap our obsolete equipment, much of which is still held sacrosanct—not because of its artistic values but simply as a result of sentimentality and unwillingness to make readjustment, especially when material sacrifice is necessary.

### *The Requirements of the Modern House of God*

The highest purpose of a church building is to shelter and facilitate services of divine worship and the administration of the sacraments. In all of the Protestant denominations there is a sincere attempt to rehabilitate worship to its proper place in the Christian movement. Even in the liturgical group of churches there are many who are not satisfied with the worship services that have grown up in a country still in its adolescent period of development. Better churchmanship is being followed on all sides. Churches that stand for free worship are seeking to conduct their worship in an architectural environment that will be conducive to the greatest effectiveness. An outstanding example of this is seen in the First Unitarian Church in Chicago where excellent artistic talent has been commanded to design and erect a sanctuary in which worshipping souls of all types of spiritual ancestry may feel that they are in a place where the Divine Presence becomes more easily realized.

### *The Worship Equipment Required in the Modern Church*

The worship equipment includes not only the principal sanctuary but the chapel, juvenile chapels, and rooms for meditation. It is important also so to treat the religious educational rooms that they will be conducive to an atmosphere of spiritual awareness.

Recently there has been a marked development of the use of the chapel as an auxiliary to the main sanctuary. It is needed for

a variety of purposes and occasions and has the effect of adding an air of sanctity to the entire church plant. Several departments of the church-school conduct worship service in the chapel. It is used for communion services at various hours during the week, for young people's or church vesper services, for weddings, for funerals, and is open continuously for private worship and meditation. Several churches have added chapels as new additions to their church equipment. Others are erecting chapels in connection with new religious educational buildings. The Skinner Chapel, Holyoke, Massachusetts; the chapels of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, Evanston, Illinois; of First Methodist Episcopal Church, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; of Grace Chapel, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, and many others are exquisite works of art.

### *Building for Religious Education*

Perhaps the demand for improved physical equipment is manifested most urgently in the field of religious education. Churches generally recognize this need. The architectural bureaus and departments of the denominations that maintain such leadership give the major portion of their time to the promotion and designing of religious educational buildings. In planning these buildings, first efforts are made to provide for a separation of the church-school into departmental units to agree with the natural development of the child. While the course of study must meet the varying needs of the growing child, the rooms to be provided must recognize the needs of the study program. The needs of the child must control the designing of the building. A certain amount of Christian control is desirable in this department of church building so that little children will not be placed in basement and cellar rooms while adults occupy the most accessible and pleasing rooms in the building. After providing separate rooms for the department groups the next need is to provide proper rooms for the classes. There is a noticeable tendency today to have larger class rooms. All rooms,



of course, have partitions of solid and, if possible, soundproof construction. Movable partitions are taboo in the modern religious educational building. Their need was only a mythical one since a social hall or church parlor provides for larger groups. With trained teachers a larger class can be more efficiently handled than a large group of small classes taught by untrained teachers in rows of cell-like rooms. Also, in a religious education building there are rooms provided for dramatics, expressional activities, project work, manual training and various activities conducted by the week-day church school and the daily vacation church-school.

### *The Needs for Fellowship and Service*

The House of God must also contain rooms suited to the activities of Christian fellowship. A ministry of fellowship and recreation is not simply an effort to prevent young people and boys and girls from securing their social life under doubtful influences, but a complete religious educational and evangelical ministry must reach the whole life, and there must be a family and fraternity expression in the Christian movement. The church parlor with its hearthstone, the boys' and girls' club rooms with fireplaces, the parish hall with a kitchen and stage, and the gymnasium and bowling alleys, enable intelligent and devoted leadership to conduct a social, recreational and expressional ministry that is effective in the principal task of the church in building up a Christian social structure.

### *Institutional and Special Types of Church Building*

The ministry of the church requires many buildings required to meet the needs of special situations such as mission and welfare centers, buildings to serve student groups, and other types.

A mission center building will contain, besides the sanctuary, rooms for medical service, for club work for all sorts of groups, pleasant rooms for a social and fellowship ministry and recreational rooms.

The buildings erected by churches at student centers must be a combination of church, home, club, and school and contain parlors and rooms for religious educational work.

Church Boards of Architecture are constantly at work with such special building projects.

### *The Income Producing Building*

It was thought by many just a few years ago that the church finance problem would be solved by the church entering the field of competitive business and erecting hotels, apartment houses and commercial buildings in connection with or combined with the church structure. The usual experience in this type of endeavor has not been sufficiently encouraging to warrant the expectation that all the religious interests desired can thus be satisfactorily cared for. It has been demonstrated, too, that a business enterprise requiring expert and specialized management and involving the usual risks of a commercial undertaking is not the most desirable way to finance the work of a Christian church.

### *Church Building Leadership Required*

In order that the physical structure to shelter and facilitate the work of the Christian movement may be adequate, a dual leadership is required. There must be a promotional and a technical leadership.

An evangel of the House of God is called for. This evangel must be directed in an effort to produce a general awakening of church people concerning the importance of the church building and its equipment. The churches themselves are not yet fully committed to a conviction that the church is of supreme importance among buildings. A tremendous amount of strength and talent of church people has in recent years been directed to the erection and maintenance of institutions which civilized communities today should provide and maintain without the assistance of the church as a corporate body. The church in heathen lands must provide eleemosynary institutions. But in

America the community itself should be concerned with matters of general education, health, and welfare. In innumerable parishes and states in this country, the church has neglected its own physical equipment to the degree that its whole task has been hampered (in many cases irrecoverably) because the churches undertook the responsibility of erecting and financing institutional buildings.

It would seem that the church must now proceed to care for its own physical structure and demand that the community, out of motives of common decency and self-interest, care for its welfare activities.

The church people must be led also in the evangel of the House of God to an attitude in which the erection of the church building is considered an integral and vital part of the religious movement. To a great extent the church has divided itself into "secular" and "spiritual" departments. It has been thought that men with lower than average degree of spiritual achievement could be entrusted to care for the building and financial concerns of the church. As a result, in too many cases the church in its business affairs has not always presented to the community an attitude agreeable to its verbal proclamations.

There must also be a specialized financial leadership for church erection. The whole financial program of the church building must be based on devotional motives with an application of sound business methods. A hundred years ago a state legislature passed a bill to permit a Protestant non-liturgical church to conduct a lottery for its new building enterprise. Some modern methods of finance have been almost as questionable. There must be an evangelism that will lead church people to the position where definite sacrifice becomes to them a means of sharing in that Christian movement begun by one who bore a heavy cross in the interest of human welfare. We should recover something of that wonderful devotion to the House of God that was exhibited by the people of Chartres when they harnessed themselves to the ox-carts and drew over weary miles the materials of which their glorious cathedral was erected.

*The Technical Leadership*

While there has been a creditable degree of progress in American church design recently, there are now great areas in church building endeavor that lack either intelligent or competent talent for the planning of the modern church. We have crudities in design that any high school student in an immediate coming generation will condemn as unintelligent and irreverent. The church itself must give attention to this problem. Just as the church is careful in the selection of those who write its religious educational texts, so should the church proceed to secure and maintain proper talent for designing its physical equipment.

The one who is to design the house of worship, religious education and fellowship must possess not only technical and artistic talent of a high quality but should himself be imbued with the ideals that need to be expressed in the language of architecture in the buildings erected by those who worship the God of Truth and Beauty.

*The Next Fifty Years of American Protestant  
Church Building*

Admittedly the present physical equipment of the Protestant churches is not ten per cent efficient in comparison with the requirements of the program to which the church is committed. Millions must be expended to bring the church equipment to a degree of efficiency that will average well with the public school buildings. Meanwhile, the program is changing and developing. "Suppose we do build a new church," says the "hard-headed" churchman, "how do we know that what we build now will not be obsolete within a few years?"

If we can predict the type and extent of church erection required for the next fifty years, a service of value may be rendered.

Those concerned with the progress and effectiveness of the church think they do well to urge the need of efficient equip-

ment. But can we assure those who are asked to contribute millions for church buildings that their investment shall not be in vain? Of course, one may say that funds contributed to erect the House of God should be contributed as an expression of personal devotion, that we should not be too particular to get "value received" in a materialistic sense. The man who contributes a thousand dollars for new church equipment is well satisfied if thereby one of his own children is brought into a higher life. But fortunately or not, the men upon whom we seem compelled to depend for church erection funds are not always willing that hard-earned dollars be expended just for the needs of today.

Assurances can be set forth to encourage the belief that we can build today with the confidence that what we erect will be found useful not only fifty but one hundred years from now.

We are prone to feel that because we live in such a swiftly moving age, fundamental human needs will change just as rapidly as a new breakfast food is brought out to sell. But physical hunger is just about the same fundamental experience now as it was in the experience of young Ishmael.

While methods and expressions change, fundamental experiences and needs are constant. Furthermore, we may expect that change may be intelligent and orderly and not irrational. Simply because changes in church methods, particularly in religious education, have been very rapid recently, we need not expect that we shall always be in an apparent state of experimentation and unsettlement. Certainly the rich talent that has been employed in the field of religious education during the past few years will get us to some definite ground, although, of course, we do not wish that anything dealing with the growth of human life and character shall become deadly standardized or static.

When designing the sanctuary for Christian worship we may feel that we can plan for future needs more confidently than in any other part of the building. Men have successfully worshipped God for hundreds of years at and in different places and under all sorts of circumstances. Certain physical provi-

sions for public and private worship have been found effective for men of all known human moods and circumstances. We assume, of course, that during the next few centuries man will continue to realize the need of approaching a consciousness of the Supreme Reality—of subduing his own lower tendencies in the presence of the Ideal and of realizing a reinforcement of all his motives and personal powers.

It is the purpose of the architecture of the sanctuary to provide the environment that will assist public or private worship to achieve its objectives.

An architecture that assists man to apprehend the fact of the mysterious—the other than physical—that helps him recollect great and overpowering realities, that subdues his unworthy motives and inspires in him new motives and reinforces all within him that is noble will be found to be effective architecture a thousand years hence as it does now. A thousand years marks but a small time in the course of human history. The noble Cathedral of Chartres, the exquisitely mysterious interior of Exeter, the soaring and powerful lines of Cologne, and the devout atmosphere of an English village church stir and minister to the soul that reaches out for God, as they did centuries ago. We know that square, squatty, disorganized and unfocused designs fail to provide what the architecture of a sanctuary should to assist the worshipping soul.

In building the sanctuary of the future, then, while we discourage and disapprove copying the structures erected in the past, we must remember that there are laws of harmony, of scale, proportion, of focalizing interest that must be recognized else the builder displays his ignorance and fails to achieve the wanted ends. Let those who wish to disregard the achievements in the past architectural expression be consistent and use no music, hymns, devotional literature, nor scripture produced by great souls of the past, but confine themselves to the passing expressions of the moment, be they ever so shallow and tawdry. We once heard a bishop in the church lapse into slang vernacular of a vulgar radio clown that had a certain popular vogue

at the time. For that preacher of the Gospel of the Everlasting, I suppose we should build a temple of crude design ornamented with automobile horns and loud speakers, thus erecting for the amusement or disgust of a coming and enlightened generation a monument to our inability to live and think in universal terms.

We conclude that if we build today a sanctuary whose proportions inspire an attitude of repentance and adulation whose shadows speak of the mysterious and the unknown, whose lights and glass speak of joyous confidence that men a short thousand years from now will repair there for the good of their souls, and the more mechanized human living becomes, the more earnestly shall rational persons desire a sanctuary.

It has well been demonstrated that the ministry of prophecy, if fundamentally effective, becomes reinforced in a sanctuary that encourages attitudes of worship. The use of radio, television or whatever comes in worship will be enhanced rather than hindered by an effective architectural environment.

In planning the House of the Interpreter for religious education the physical equipment can be so expertly and correctly designed that an immediate flexible and a future changing program can be anticipated.

Let the floors of the new religious educational building be level and the main perpendicular divisions follow straight lines. Let certain portions be free of load bearing members and mechanical equipment. Then if a larger room is desired at some future time, a pair of mechanics can remove the wall in a day's time, or, if care is taken in locating doors and windows, a new partition can be installed to divide a large room into two or more smaller ones.

To begin with, the departmentalized building is fundamentally sound. When psychologists tell us that the age stages of the growing person present the teacher various difficulties and opportunities they are not telling us of anything that they created. The child always passed through certain stages of growth and development and always will. These factors in

child growth development were present when the pulpiteers' preaching of hell fire and infant damnation thundered forth just as they are now. Now, however, we recognize human factors which then were unknown or ignored. Consequently, we may hope that the rooms required for a program that will change, to be sure, will not have to encounter such radical changes as were necessary in the past. Let the religious educational building be designed with regard to the laws of light and sound and be pleasant and convenient, with rooms of various sizes, and with physical and mental and spiritual needs of childhood observed, and we shall find that at the outset a flexible program is possible and that future changes and developments may conveniently be accommodated.

### *Church Building and Unity*

The advancement of an adequate church building program is sometimes an effective factor in the promotion of Church unity. Denominational lines become weak and disappear where the church building makes possible an adequate ministry to the child and youth and that inspires a desire to worship.

Perhaps when Christian people have spent a few more billions on lodge temples, country clubs and war memorials someone will be able to lead in building a real Protestant Cathedral as a sign that the community after all is unitedly to think of God.

### *Church Architecture and the Advance of American Culture*

The church should lead in the advancement of the arts. In the newer churches of finer quality much artistic talent is employed in producing the glass, mosaics, carved stone and wood, and textiles. There is a stimulation, too, of good craftsmanship.

When one sees what horrible and moronic stupidities the new-rich modern community has allowed to pose as art, one may devoutly pray that again the church may inspire and patronize the arts.



## XVI

### RELIGIOUS JOURNALISM—TODAY AND TOMORROW

EDWARD LAIRD MILLS

JOURNALISM is such a commonplace of modern life that we think of it as having been here always, but that is not true. While a clergyman brought the first printing press to this country in 1638,<sup>1</sup> it was not until 1704 that the first American newspaper was started. For a long time the papers that were published seem to have been devoted more to politics than news and personal abuse was not infrequent in their columns.

Shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War, in 1784, the first daily newspaper made its appearance and almost thirty years later in 1813 the first religious weekly paper was inaugurated under the name of "The Religious Remembrancer." Apparently there was a felt need for publications, for they multiplied with great rapidity. Practically all religious bodies started organs to aid in the promotion of their work and some of them had more than one. In 1826, according to one authority, the Congregational and Methodist weeklies in Boston enjoyed a circulation of 5,000 each while the Baptist, Unitarian and Universalist papers in the same city had 1,000 each. It is interesting to observe that four of these papers have had a continuous publication since that time and are still issued from Boston. The name of the fifth has been incorporated with that of a denominational contemporary in New York and thus it is still serving its public. By 1828 there were thirty-seven religious weeklies in the United States and one of these, "The Christian

<sup>1</sup> Bleyer, *Main Currents in History of American Journalism*.

Advocate," had a circulation of 15,000 and was said to lead all publications in the world in this respect, not excepting "The London Times." \* "The Churchman" of New York is another journal which claims to have been published continuously for over a century and "The Lutheran" now published in Philadelphia issued a centennial number in the summer of 1931.

### *Days of Prosperity*

For the first seventy-five years of its life the religious press in the United States grew in size and influence and made a large contribution to the idealistic side of national life. It is surprising and regrettable that both the chroniclers of American history and the writers who have told the story of its journalism seem in large measure to have overlooked this fact. Perhaps the reprehensible tendency to distort the theory of the separation of church and state into a dogma requiring silence on all facts pertaining to the relation of religion to life is responsible for the omission.

At the time the religious press began, the population of the country was largely Protestant and the earlier publications bore that complexion. However, when the Roman Catholic Church had been greatly strengthened by immigration, it began the publication of religious papers to an even greater extent than the churches which were already on the ground. Today one is issued for practically everyone of the more than one hundred dioceses in the United States, and in addition a large number of other publications which represent various phases of Catholic life and activity. More recently, the coming of several million Jews has led to the establishment of journals which ably represent that historic faith.

The Religious Press Department of the International Advertising Association is able to announce that the total circulation of the religious press in the United States today is approximately 17,500,000. This means that practically one half of the population of the country is comprised in its reading public.

\* McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*.

The Association also lists 221 publications having a circulation of over 12,000,000, which it regards as being particularly adapted to the use of advertisers.

The religious press came on the American scene when the development of the frontier was in full swing. That development had a marked influence upon the character of American Christianity. It made the churches in this country free, forward looking and pragmatic.<sup>3</sup> These qualities grew naturally out of their dependence upon the public for support. The national mind was in the making and among the major forces affecting it were the circuit rider, the church college, and the denominational press. It is passing strange that while wealthy Christian laymen have given hundreds of millions of dollars to church colleges and millions of dollars to church hospitals, they have almost wholly neglected to note the importance of the church press as an agency for creating a Christian mind. Of all church institutions it is the only one which is expected to be self-supporting or to pay a profit. Its missionary nature has been obscured by its seeming likeness to ordinary business enterprises. As a matter of fact it has rendered incalculable service to the church by helping it reach the double objective which society has set for it:

The provision of facilities for divine worship on the part of adults.

The establishment and maintenance of an effective system of religious education for the young.

In the early days when books were scarce and visits of ecclesiastical superiors necessarily infrequent, the church paper was a potent factor in preventing the growth of local vagaries in theology and aberrations in church practice. But the uniformity it encouraged was flexible rather than rigid. Gradually American Christianity has evolved a preachable theology and an efficient type of polity so that today at least ninety per cent of the Protestant church members in the United States belong to seven denominational families.

<sup>3</sup> Mode, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*.

The early religious papers not only provided spiritual nourishment for their readers but they also carried a great deal of material of interest to the home. Household hints, including recipes, were common and considerable attention was given to farm and garden topics. A paper on the Pacific Coast which has been published continuously since 1855 announced in the first issue that it was to be devoted to agriculture, education, temperance, general intelligence and religion. When the Sunday School became an agency of religious work many years later the church weeklies gave regular comments upon the lessons used. Now it is obvious that of the five objectives set forth by the Pacific Coast paper, four have been taken over by publications devoted to those specific interests. Religion is left as the sole *raison d'être* for the continuance of religious papers. People who subscribed for them a half-century ago may have done so for any one of a half-dozen reasons. Today those who support them must be motivated entirely by their interest in religion.

Regarding their attitude to public questions, it is difficult to speak with authority. The field is wide and the subjects of discussion multifarious. During the Civil War religious papers were divided along sectional lines. In more recent days the Protestant press has been pretty well unified in its attitude against the traffic in intoxicating liquor. It is generally agreed that along with the country weeklies and the farm journals it was a chief factor in the success of the movement for prohibition. It will be noted that all three of these groups serve constituencies that are wholly or mostly rural in character. More recently the Protestant papers have shown admirable devotion to the cause of world peace, and have been generally friendly to American participation in the League of Nations and the World Court. Both Protestant and Roman Catholic papers have strongly condemned the production and distribution of salacious motion pictures. Measures to relieve distress arising from flood, famine, earthquake or other calamity have always received their wholehearted support. An undenominational paper specialized

for years in making appeals for relief and found that the practice attracted patronage rather than repelled it.

The religious press has always been an important factor in promoting the sale and reading of good books. Today that type of service is more important than ever before. The flood of fiction—sex-saturated, materialistic and cynical—threatens to engulf all readers who do not have access to those book reviews and notices which are written from a Christian point of view. Considered merely as a disinfectant and prophylactic, the religious press is well worth while.

### *Hills of Difficulty*

Following the period of expansion and prosperity which lasted for about three quarters of a century the religious press began to experience difficulties.

To begin with, it was projected along sectional and denominational lines. The diminishing frontier, the rising tide of nationalism, and the growing sympathy with movements of religious integration impaired the validity of its original set-up.

In New York during the past generation two papers founded by distinguished clergymen, and not specifically denominational, have become entirely secularized. A third with which the name of another great preacher was identified in its early days has become a monthly, and three others have been discontinued. Thus at least half the religious papers published in the metropolis have disappeared. Some papers that are still published have taken over the good will and subscription lists of a half dozen of their contemporaries whose strength proved insufficient for the struggle.

The increasingly hard time experienced by the religious press is due in part to the inability of the editors to change as rapidly as new conditions demand. A goodly portion of their constituents always insist upon adherence to traditional standards and methods. Moreover, the denominations have mistakenly persisted in regarding the papers as step-children rather than as

full members of the family. Much promotional matter dealing with benevolences has been channeled to the church membership in ephemeral organs started for the purpose or by means of pamphlets. When Sunday Schools became an effective instrument of Christian service, the denominations at once began the publication of an extensive line of Sunday School literature. This included story papers for young people which came to be read by adults as well. Such papers have had a deleterious effect upon the circulation of the older journals. Thus, in one denomination, such a story paper has a circulation of 900,000 per week, which is more than four times as great as the total circulation of its several historic weeklies.

Moreover, within the past quarter of a century the afternoon daily papers have risen to a place of power. Many of them have been devoting increasing space in the Saturday edition to religious news and announcements. And more recently local churches have begun the custom of carrying paid advertising in these editions. Within the past month the writer has noted a Saturday evening paper which devoted two full pages to church news and announcements and a third page to paid advertisements of church services.

Another movement which has become widespread is the issuance of bulletins by local churches. These carry not only programs for the Sunday Worship services and announcements for the week, but frequently news of the local parish and occasionally some general religious material. This last named appears to an even greater extent in the parish papers which are being published with increasing frequency. These are sent by mail to members of the local congregation during the week.

The tendency of all these innovations has been to make the average church member feel that he does not need the ministrations of the old-fashioned religious weekly. Increasingly the latter tends to serve the ministry and the small percentage of laymen who are world-minded. However, the publication of journals specifically for clergymen tends to cool their affection

for their denominational press which must, in a measure, serve both clergy and laymen.

But the major reason for the present distressing conditions which confront the religious press is due not so much to the things just mentioned, but rather to the establishment and growth of a half dozen popular weekly magazines during the past third of a century. Each of these has a circulation of from 1,000,000 to 2,500,000 per issue. This has made it possible for general advertisers to reach the American people—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish—without recourse to the several hundred religious papers. Many of these advertisers might not have discovered the possibility so quickly had they not been advised of it by advertising experts. The latter found it simpler to deal with a half-dozen fairly well standardized publications than with hundreds of small and scattered papers which were printed in different sizes and which had a bewildering variety of rates for space. Moreover, they had the American preference for quantity rather than quality and overshot the mark. For as a matter of fact, quality circulation such as the religious papers indubitably possess is well worth consideration. However, the advice of the experts was followed and today, for the most part, the advertising columns of religious papers are patronized only by publishers, by the manufacturers of church supplies and by denominational institutions of education and benevolence. As the revenue from subscribers has never met the cost of production, the disappearance of profitable advertising meant the advent of financial distress. Consequently, for the past twenty years practically all religious journals have felt the pinch of poverty. Some of them have raised the rates of subscription but none of them sufficiently to provide entirely for the costs of publication. In some cases the editors and publishers have worked without salary and made additional sacrifices in order to continue publication. More frequently the denominations have extended some form of subsidy through their boards or publishing agencies. The rarely fortunate paper has had an endow-

ment which was created in the days of prosperity and which now prolongs its life.

While it is generally recognized that every denomination must use some type of publication for purposes of promotion, the universal tendency is toward consolidation of pre-existing publications. And the history of these consolidations shows that in practically every instance the subscription lists of the papers taken over tend to vanish. The signs of the times unmistakably indicate that the religious journalism, which made such a great contribution to American Christianity during the nineteenth century, must be radically transformed if it is to serve the church and society efficiently in the twentieth century. One of these signs is the frequency with which ecclesiastical gatherings, local and general, express themselves in favor of a Christian daily newspaper. It may be worth while to examine the possibilities latent in that proposal.

### *A Christian Daily?*

Most people will be surprised to learn that a number of attempts were made during the nineteenth century to establish a "Christian" daily newspaper. The late "New York World" began its existence in 1860 as a "religious two-cent daily." The experiment lasted thirteen months. The "New York Sun," the "Boston News," and the "New York Witness" are other instances. First of the lot was the "Philadelphia North American" which began publication in 1839. The "Christian" character of these papers seems to have resided largely in their exclusion of theatrical advertising, while the "North American" put "oyster cellars," an early variety of saloon, also under the ban.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, there was no attempt to develop a religious news service or to coordinate editorial policy with church sentiment.

In the year 1850 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints established the weekly *Deseret News* in Salt Lake City, Utah. A few years later it became a daily. From the first issue it has been the official organ of the "Mormon" church. Located

<sup>4</sup> Lee, *History of American Journalism*.



in a community where a full half of the population professes that faith or "leans" toward it, *The News* has found it possible to combine the functions of a general newspaper and a church organ. It has the comics, literary features and news services enjoyed by secular journals and adds to these a full treatment of ecclesiastical matters. This example cannot be generally followed. Moreover, other churches do not engage in secular business and therefore cannot duplicate the ease of securing advertising which characterizes *The News*. Nor do other churches possess a constituency which has been so trained to follow authoritarian leadership in other than spiritual affairs.

In 1908 the "Christian Science Monitor" began publication in Boston. In the years since it has developed a quality circulation of moderate size and is highly regarded for the amount and character of its foreign news. As the proprietary church is still small it is able to command the loyalty of its members to an unusual degree. It meets the difficulty of securing advertising by carrying the cards of a large number of retail merchants scattered throughout the United States. These are classified according to region and city. Evidently, the local Scientists make it worth while for the advertisers to continue. Human nature being what it is, it is not likely that larger ecclesiastical bodies could use this method of commanding success.

The third religious daily now published in the English language is the "American Tribune" of Dubuque, Iowa, which is under Roman Catholic ownership. It has a small circulation and has not succeeded in solving the problem of securing advertising.

Those who know the most about the newspaper business are least enthusiastic about the possibilities resident in so-called "Christian" dailies. The difficulties in the way of laying down an editorial policy which would be acceptable to the entire constituency of such a paper are practically insurmountable. What comic strips and feature stories should be admitted to its pages; what sports should be treated and how; what should be its attitude toward the tangled question of America's international re-

lations—these questions show at once the impossibility of conducting a daily church-owned or church-controlled, which would appeal at once to the general public and meet with the approval of the church membership which was ultimately responsible for it. Christian men of wealth should be given every encouragement to enter the newspaper business as individuals and Christian people should be encouraged to patronize those dailies whose ideals are most nearly consonant with the principles of the faith. It is even more important that consecrated young men and women who are facing the choice of a life work should be directed into journalism. Any one of the editors of a daily paper—chief, managing, telegraph, city—is more influential in fixing the standards of thought and action for the community than any one of the lawyers, physicians, teachers or clergymen in it. As yet most of them fail to recognize the posts they occupy as fields for the exercise of Christian principles. The small city dailies are beginning to show promising improvement in this regard. But responsibility for the publication of daily papers which seek a general circulation must continue to rest upon individuals rather than upon the church in its corporate capacity.

### *Is There a Way Out?*

What is the future of religious journalism? In general it may be said that all papers having a circulation of 25,000 or less, stand in slippery places and unless aided by generous subsidies, must gradually slide into oblivion. The increasing ease of transportation and communication makes larger territorial units possible and imperative for individual publications. On the other hand, it is clear that the time has not arrived when purely undenominational journals for laymen can be successfully promoted. But the interest in denominational propaganda as such is decreasing. Can these two tendencies be reconciled? Yes, by carrying over into the religious field some of those policies which have already proven their worth in secular journalism. Fewer and better religious papers is the

need of the hour. There are a growing number of cities with populations of 300,000 to 1,000,000, which have only one morning daily paper and two in the afternoon. The religious papers cannot escape that trend toward concentration. No single publication can longer stand on its own merits. The Christian public demands a quality of content that is beyond the reach of the individual paper. Here is where the principal of syndication has demonstrated its value. There are hundreds of Sunday papers circulating by the millions of copies but the magazine features which absorb the bulk of their space and produce the most of their circulation, are furnished by a relatively small number of syndicates. In the ecclesiastical field some steps have already been taken in this direction.

Some years ago the National Catholic Welfare Council started a news service with headquarters at Washington and with competent correspondents located throughout the world. A trained secular journalist was employed at a large salary to organize the service and it has been maintained upon a high level of excellence. The service it provides is now taken by eighty or more Catholic weeklies whose readers thus have the benefit of general church news plus the intimacy afforded by a regional point of view. By this device quality is guaranteed at a minimum of cost. This is news syndication. It would be easier still to organize a united service to provide feature articles.

In 1924 the Methodist Episcopal Church selected a contributing editor and a Washington correspondent whose business it was to provide common material for the nine official and semi-official weeklies conducted by the denomination. Eight years later the Contributing Editor was eliminated, but the editors of the various official journals were constituted an "editorial board" which provides a considerable amount of syndicated material of general interest. The plan has succeeded in improving the contents of the papers and increasing reader interest to a degree beyond what any of the papers could do by itself. Their subscribers now have the benefit of a national

outlook combined with a local flavor, both of which are desirable.

The future of the Protestant religious press depends upon the willingness of church leaders to profit by the lessons taught by the secular dailies and tried out in a modest way by the Roman Catholic and Methodist Episcopal Churches.

The denominations all have publishing houses engaged in the profitable production and distribution of Sunday School literature. Why should not the heads of a dozen of these institutions arrange to meet in conference and set up plans which would re-make Protestant religious journalism and equip it for a career of usefulness in the twentieth century that would be comparable to its achievements in the nineteenth century? Such a conference should make provision for:

(A) *A feature syndicate.* This should be called upon to provide not only poems and articles of religious content and high literary excellence, together with wholesome serial stories, but also—and more importantly—to furnish comic strips of unexceptionable moral quality and cartoons drawn by first-class artists some of which would give a Christian interpretation of current events and others would provide ammunition for use in the moral crusades which engage the energies of the churches from time to time.

(B) *A Washington news service.* This should deal with those aspects of legislation and departmental activity which have religious or moral significance. Hundreds of columns of news are sent from the nation's capital each day but almost none of it is written from a point of view that will give to church people what they most want to know. Foreign complications affecting missionary effort; irrigation projects calling for home mission activity; departmental rulings affecting Indians, Orientals, Mexicans and quota immigrants; the work done by the Bureau of Education; the law enforcement activities undertaken by the Department of Justice; the question of size for the Army and Navy; Puerto Rico and the Philippines—these subjects are but samples showing the way in which the per-

formance of governmental functions may affect the work of the Christian Church. To know what is going on in these fields is essential to churchmen, lay and clerical. The only way they can find out is from a religious press properly equipped to furnish the information. More important still is the interpretation of the news thus obtained. The prophets were interpreters rather than reporters and religious papers are like them in this respect. Like the weekly journals of opinion they regard news as raw material for comment.

(C) *A world-wide Protestant news service.* There are already plenty of Christian leaders in every country who would make capable correspondents but they need to be mobilized and trained so that their dispatches will have human interest in addition to the Christian point of view. If the Protestant church in a small German state last year lost eleven per cent of its members, a Protestant in the United States should not be compelled to take a Roman Catholic weekly in order to find it out. Neither should he have to depend upon secular news bureaus to provide adequate data about the spiritual aspects of the revolution in Spain.

(D) *A joint advertising agency.* This should seek to reinstate religious journalism in favor with the great general advertisers. By offering them large circulation, uniform sizes of page and column and identical rates per thousand circulation together with ease of making contracts, such an achievement is wholly possible.

These facilities for improving the religious press should be given at once to the papers under the immediate control of the churches and should also be made available at moderate cost to those journals which are privately owned and operated. The urge for integration which has found expression in the Federal Council of Churches, and in similar organizations which seek to bring the fruits of expert investigation to bear upon the problems of missions, home and foreign, religious education, church colleges and moral reform can be more easily and profitably satisfied by the use of the syndicate device in church

papers than in any other way. The cost would be nominal and it would do more than any other one thing to make really effective the organizations for co-operation which already exist.

### *Salvation through Service*

But syndication is not the whole story. The local editor still has a place. True, the giants of former days are no longer with us. They ran their papers to suit themselves. Men like Henry Watterson and Charles A. Dana in the field of secular journalism were matched by religious editors like James M. Buckley, Lyman Abbott and Irenaeus Prime. In a time when production costs were low, the desire of the public to witness the mental idiosyncrasies of these and similarly brilliant men could be gratified. Now a different day has dawned. Even these great men would now shrink to the proportion of columnists and would make their contributions to publications which combined the output of a score of men, each of whom possessed specialized ability. Now more than ever every periodical is edited by its readers. And that is a sign of strength and not of weakness. The readers of religious papers are Christian men and women with experience in practical life and they are prepared to give as well as take.

The editor is a preacher who is assigned to write instead of talk. Like his brother in the pulpit, it is his function to apply God's timeless truths to the conditions of today. Fundamentally, there is not so much difference between today and yesterday as many suppose. But they are superficially different in many respects. The press and the pulpit have the common task of creating a Christian mind with regard to matters of personal and collective concern. Christian ideals do not dominate the American public. The church went along with the crowd in prosecution of the World War; it did nothing to restrain the speculative excesses that characterized the following decade of inflation; and now after the foreordained crash, it is unable to inspire the people though its influence does serve to strengthen their fortitude.

This incompetence in time of crisis is a new thing under the sun. At least it has not been witnessed on such a large scale since the conversion of Constantine. It does not mean that Christian thinking or Christian devotion has disappeared from the ministers and laymen affiliated with the church. It is due rather to the unprecedented fact that the most powerful agencies for molding public manners and morals are now in the hands of people who do not share the sentiments of the church and therefore cannot voice the Christian message. These agencies are the radio, the movie, and the daily paper, all of which are creations of comparatively recent date. Without exception, they are motivated chiefly by the desire for financial gain. Profit, not service, is their objective. While most of the population of the United States has some relation to the church, with the majority that relation is merely nominal. Probably not over one-third of the membership of the church is numbered among the habitual attendants at the services of divine worship or contributes regularly to the church budget. The same third furnishes most of the subscribers to the church papers. The non-church group and the nominal church members alike have their minds made up by the mass of material furnished by the non-Christian agencies above mentioned. If the ideals of Christ are to conquer the world then the church must set them forth with unaccustomed vigor, and every avenue must be used to get them over to the multitudes which are still like sheep without a shepherd. The church must see to it that the spirit of true religion shall be injected into broadcasts, pictures and the daily papers. But to do this it will first be necessary to build the pulpit back into a place of power and to make religious journalism once more an institution to be reckoned with. It should be remembered in this connection that there is a degree of permanence attached to preaching in print that sets it apart from the more ephemeral utterances of radio, talkie and pulpit. It deepens the impressions they make. Moreover, the by-products arising from an ably edited and widely circulated religious press are of no small value. It helps to set high standards for its secular contempo-

raries and it furnishes them needed inspiration. Unquestionably the vast improvement of the daily press in its manners and tone as compared with past generations is due in considerable part to the influence of the Christian press. Speaking of the "British Weekly" some years ago a thoughtful writer remarks that "it would be difficult to estimate" the influence it has exercised upon its contemporaries.\*

These alluring goals cannot be reached apart from the efforts put forth by Christian ministers. The parish preacher needs the religious weekly in the homes of his people to undergird the sermons he preaches to them on Sunday. His parishioners need the religious paper in order that their children may profit from the wholesome atmosphere consequent upon its presence in the home. Only so will they draw the conclusion that religion is a natural and necessary thing.

The best days of religious journalism should lie ahead of it. But it is utterly futile to attempt the future's portal with a key fabricated almost a century ago. Never was the public more bewildered by the complexities of thought and by changes in conduct. Never would it welcome more warmly a spiritual mentor fitted to guide it through the maze. Religious weeklies which are acutely aware of popular needs and ambitious to meet them may be able to evangelize even the news stands and in the substantial approval there manifested to find a suitable reward of merit.

\* Symon, *The Press and Its Story*. London.



## XVII

### THE CHURCH COLLEGE

ALBERT E. KIRK

IN seeking to leaven the world with the Christian principles and to refashion it into a kingdom of God, the Church has always utilized the educational institution as one of its primary agencies. Most of the institutions of higher learning in western civilization from the dawn of the Christian era to the present were directly or indirectly founded and sponsored by the Church. From the Jewish schools down through the Reformation period practically all of the schools had religious education as one of their dominant aims and were under the direction of church leaders. Most of the European universities were developed from the earlier cathedral and collegiate church schools. In America the parochial and community schools were almost always religious in emphasis and leadership.

With the beginning of higher education in America there commenced an unparalleled expression of the educational impulse inhering in Christianity. Harvard in 1636, College of William and Mary in 1693, Yale in 1701, Kings College in 1754, and Dartmouth in 1769 were founded for the training of Christian leaders. From 1820 to 1870 about 250 institutions of higher learning were established. Some 50 of these were founded by the states, some 30 by the Roman Catholic Church, and the others by the Protestant denominations. By the close of the nineteenth century more than 500 American universities and colleges had been founded in response to the religious-educational impulse and recognized some kind of affiliation with the churches.

To what extent is the educational institution to remain an agent in the work of the Church in the period just ahead? This inquiry can best be answered by raising and seeking answer to four other questions. First, how do these schools affiliated with the churches fit into the increasingly standardized educational system of today? Second, are they continuing to be the pre-eminent sources of successful men? Third, how do they accord with current changes in educational methods? Fourth, how do or may they vitally serve the program of the coming Church?

### I

First, how do these schools affiliated with the churches fit into the increasingly standardized educational system of today?

There are a number of developments in our growing educational system (and we speak now particularly of America) that might seem to indicate the passing of the church school. These developments are embraced in the general movement upon the part of the State to increasingly provide tax-supported facilities at all levels of education—secondary, high school, junior college, and university. Recent significant developments in this general movement are witnessed in the teachers colleges and the municipal universities.

This general and rapid development of tax-supported education has steadily reduced the ratio of the educational load carried by the church schools when compared with the total for the nation, but has not reduced the actual educational load carried by these institutions. In other words, the church schools as a whole are enrolling more students now than ever before though an enlarging percentage of student life is being cared for in the tax-supported institutions. In the field of the liberal arts college one-half of the students are now enrolled in the church-supported colleges, one-fourth in the independent colleges and one-fourth in the tax-supported colleges.

The most serious problem for the church college in its relationship to the growing tax-supported system is presented by the rise of the junior college and the movement of the uni-

versity toward technical and professional training. The one presses upon the four-year college from beneath, the other from above. They are frequently referred to as the nether and the upper millstones. Not a few these days are prophesying the serious decline of the four-year college, if not its extinction, upon the theory that junior colleges will spring up almost everywhere and that the universities will accept junior college graduates and put them immediately to work in technical and professional studies.

It is not strange that some extravagant claims for the junior college should have found expression, nor that some direful prophecies of the speedy disruption and displacement of our colleges of liberal arts by the junior college movement should have been put forth. Most of these unwarranted claims and forecasts are the result of the fallacy of logical over-simplification combined with the reasoning exemplified in the classical case of the tent and the camel's nose. Some "educators" observing that certain four-year colleges have become junior colleges dismiss the matter from their minds with the conclusion that therefore all must do the same thing; others note the reaching up of secondary education and the reaching down of professional training and affirm the speedy disappearance of everything between; a few have found in the mere fact of the junior and senior college alignment of courses the sure seed of dissolution for the four-year college; and there are those who discover that in the junior college there is a chance to delegate all general education to the secondary schools, leaving the university to devote itself entirely to professional and advanced specialization, thus "coming up to" the European educational systems, and dismissing all other considerations and leaving the results to be somehow brought about as required by this logic, call upon all educationists to cease further inquiry and find rest for their weary minds.

The craving of the logical faculty for simplification, for standardization, serves a great purpose, but life is too vital, too creative, too evolutionary simply to yield itself to such manip-

ulation; and particularly is this so in its processes of education which deal immediately with its vital, creative, evolutionary springs. Until logical simplification has at least standardized all houses, all dresses, all of a hundred environmental factors, it can hardly commend itself to thoughtful minds as the final deciding power in education. The forecasting of ultimate outcomes by indefinitely projecting certain temporarily observed tendencies is almost always worthless—swinging pendulums stop after a while. For instance the really remarkable development of education by extension and correspondence courses does not mean the ultimate disappearance of the colleges and universities. To those tempted to set up European education as an ideal for America “to come up to” we commend a little reading in the field of educational philosophy against the background of actual history.

The claim is made that the junior college offers the high school graduate an ample opportunity to come to riper maturity in the home community without the necessity of adjusting himself to the distractions of a new environment. The argument is not conclusive, for much has been said and can be said of the advantages as education proceeds of the student meeting new environments, new situations, new influences. A justifiable and significant claim of the college is that it is a “half-way house” for youth ready for larger responsibilities than the home community necessitated and yet not ready for the full autonomy of maturer life.

Akin to the above is the claim put forth by some that the junior college at last lifts the high school where it can obtain its objective; namely, the completion of adolescent education, for until now “it has helped the student for a considerable distance in his journey toward an education, but did not deliver him at a well-defined goal.” It is not clear that the high school should have the objective just named; nor is it the showing of a modest spirit for high school teachers to insist that youth, upon peril of forfeiting possibilities of best progress, must not leave the home town nor the home teachers. For the high school not to deliver the student at the ultimate destina-

tion may not be more of a misfortune than that a bus line should take a passenger part way, then deliver him to another bus for the completion of the trip, or perhaps more accurately, deliver him to a train or an airplane for the last portion of the journey.

Some stress the claim that the junior college will be free from the traditions that have bound both the high school and the college and will more readily adjust itself to changing needs. It must not be thought that the high school and the college have been static, that they do not adjust themselves to changing needs; the slightest acquaintanceship with the history of either forbids that. Consider, for instance, the steady and rapid enrichment of both in curriculum—the classics, the electives, the development of libraries and laboratories, survey and orientation courses, discussion and honors courses, etc. Whether the junior college will do better remains to be seen. Its actions and reactions so far on such questions as vocation versus academic studies, preparatory versus terminal courses, separation from high school in plant, social life and activities, or close alignment with it, would indicate it to have the same educational problems to face, and that it has no other source than the common fund of experience from which to draw its wisdom. If tradition be used in its fuller sense of that which is rather fanciful and poetic, all that touches the heart as contrasted with the unimaginative, the dull, the matter of fact, then no one who loves youth and the better tomorrow should aspire to have any division of education freed from it, and least of all the education that deals with idealistic and romantic adolescence.

It is very clear that college administrators cannot in their plans and calculations afford to ignore the junior college movement. This movement brings the latest and thus far the most searching test for the four-year college of liberal arts. The wisdom or lack of wisdom with which this test is met will determine, more than any other factor now affecting them, the future of many of the four-year colleges.

Four-year colleges that do not have much prospect of rising

to strength, now harassed by deficits, with upper division work limited in courses, with small enrollments in these upper courses, and hence giving low-grade work to upper classmen at prohibitive costs to the institution, should lay aside false pride and face squarely the advantages of becoming junior colleges. Under such circumstances the possible idea of a supporting church constituency that only a four-year college is a real educational institution needs correction. A high-grade junior college will articulate with the American educational system and minister to present-day needs better than a low-grade four-year college. The tragedy is that some colleges belonging to the class under discussion delayed the consideration of the junior college alternative so long they necessarily passed out of existence altogether. There are others that could now adjust their programs and become splendid junior colleges; a much longer delay will mean their extinction.

What are some of the considerations that commend junior college status to weak and inadequately supported four-year colleges? First, many of these, with the great bulk of enrollment in the freshman and sophomore classes, are now practically junior colleges with the effectiveness of their junior college work sapped by the expensive demands of upper division work which at that remains weak and disappointing. With concentration upon junior college work these schools could hope for continuance with honor, rendering a large and highly qualitative service.

In the second place, functioning as high-grade junior colleges, they could better attract many of those students intending to take degrees in the university or professional school who would not enter a four-year college. Many universities are now encouraging high school students to attend a two-year junior college before coming to them. That encouragement is bound to increase as junior colleges multiply. Junior colleges well supported, ably administered, with attractive campus and living conditions, with choice faculty, and with wholesome moral and religious influence may face the future with confi-

dence that they shall have ample enrollments and adequate support.

In the third place, such a junior college would have a maximum attraction for students who would not venture upon a four-year course, but who could be induced to enter college for a course of shorter duration. The junior college can more easily offer terminal courses to such students than can the four-year college. Both cultural and vocational incompleteness of high school work is increasingly recognized and the number of students who will be seeking one or two years of further educational opportunity will increase proportionally.

The theory that the universities will soon limit their programs to the accepting of junior college graduates and the putting of them immediately to work in technical and professional studies overlooks a number of vital facts. It overlooks the fact of the approaching saturation point in all types of technical and professional education which inevitably means higher rather than lower standards for admission to those schools. It does not take into account the steady increase in the number of high school graduates going on for further study, and the increasing leisure coming in our civilization calling for more and not less of liberal education.

In short the developments and realignments in the educational system, while greatly affecting the scope and character of work done in the educational institutions affiliated with the churches, do not preclude their continuance as a major factor in American education. The question of their continued usefulness is in their own hands. It will be determined by the quality of work they shall be able to offer and judged by the human product they shall send out into the world.

## II

Second, are the schools affiliated with the churches continuing to be a pre-eminent source of successful men?

There is a growing recognition of the fact that the most vital gauge of an educational institution is its human product.

This development is the fulfillment of a hope long cherished by the four-year college, especially those unhampered in their emphasis upon Christian idealism. Their claim has been that the well-organized Christian college is a unit of highest educational efficiency, and hence they welcome the more vital tests, confident they will bring a public recognition more in harmony with the merits of the situation.

Mr. Guy Morrison Walker of New York, lawyer, economist, author, gave to the press, twenty-five years ago, an article entitled: "The Sources of Successful Men." The article appeared in several magazines and represented an important contribution to educational literature. After presenting the results of a very wide investigation as to the sources of successful men, his conclusion was:

"From the figures just given it is apparent, first, that the largest number of successful men come from the small colleges; second, that the percentage of success is very much higher among the students of the small colleges than it is among those of the large universities, the percentage being frequently more than twice as great as that in the large schools; and third, that the pre-eminent place, both in the total number of successful men and in the percentage of success, goes to the small church colleges."

That was twenty-five years ago; are these colleges continuing to be the pre-eminent sources of successful graduates or have they been superseded? The following representative facts answer that question.

Eleven of the last twelve Presidents of the United States had college training as follows: eight in small colleges with distinct Christian emphasis; two in large, independent universities; one in a small state university.

Of the nine justices of the Supreme Court of the United States (1930) eight had college training as follows: five in smaller colleges with distinct Christian emphasis; one in a small state university; one in a small municipal university; one in a large, independent university.

Of the forty-eight governors of States (1930) thirty-two had



college training as follows: sixteen in smaller colleges with distinct Christian emphasis; nine in state universities; four in normal schools; three in large, independent universities.

Of the ninety-five United States senators (1930) sixty-four had college training as follows: thirty-seven in small colleges with distinct Christian emphasis; sixteen in state universities; seven in large, independent universities; four in normal schools.

Of the members of the national House of Representatives the college training of two hundred sixty-nine is reported in *Who's Who* as follows: one hundred sixty-one in small colleges with distinct Christian emphasis; fifty-three in state universities; twenty-nine in large, independent universities; twenty-five in normal schools; one in a municipal university.

In *Who's Who*, 1928-1929 edition, there are 28,805 biographies of which 16,433 state that the individuals received the bachelor degree from American institutions. The following summaries are quoted from an exhaustive analysis published in the November 1, 1930, "School and Society":

"Considering further the actual numbers of representatives of the several colleges, the expectation would be that the larger universities would stand at the head of the list. But this is not the case. While several universities do actually stand at the head, six institutions of less than 1,000 enrollment are among the highest twenty, and one third of the highest sixty have the smaller enrollment. There are only four state institutions in the first twenty, and in the entire list of 139 institutions the twenty-five state universities furnish only 21.6 per cent of the list, but little more than Harvard, Yale, and Princeton."

Considering the schools with the highest percentage of living alumni in *Who's Who* the report is:

"None of the great state universities is within the highest twenty, but for that matter only two public institutions—lie within the first thirty-five, and neither one of these is reckoned among the large state universities."

\* Likewise in the fields of church work and of Christian service the educational institutions under the auspices of the churches

continue to furnish most of the leaders. The following data based upon studies of representative groups of leaders in the Methodist Episcopal Church is quite typical and could be duplicated from the contemporary records of most of the denominations.

Of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1930, all received baccalaureate degrees as follows: from state universities, one; from large independent universities, two; from Methodist colleges and universities, forty.

Of the editors of the official publications of the Methodist Episcopal Church all received baccalaureate degrees as follows: from state universities, one; from Methodist colleges and universities, seven.

Of the secretaries of the benevolent boards of the Methodist Episcopal Church fourteen received baccalaureate degrees from American institutions as follows: from state universities, one; from large independent universities, one; from Methodist colleges and universities, twelve.

Two hundred eighty-one of the men admitted to full membership in the Methodist Episcopal ministry in 1926 had college training as follows: 81.1 per cent in non-tax-supported institutions; 10 per cent in tax-supported institutions; 8.9 per cent attended both types of institutions.

The missionaries of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church sent out in the years 1912-1928 inclusive, numbering 1,260, received collegiate training as follows: from colleges and universities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 49.52 per cent; from other denominational colleges and universities, 7.24 per cent; from independent colleges and universities, 26.42 per cent, and from state educational institutions, 16.82 per cent. Contrary to a frequently expressed opinion the Methodist educational institutions produced a larger percentage of this total missionary group in the later years of the period under consideration than in the earlier years of that period. Since 1921 the percentage from the Methodist schools exceeded the 49.52 per cent average in five of the seven years.

Upon the other hand, and likewise contrary to a frequently expressed opinion, the state educational institutions produced a smaller percentage in the later years of the period. Indeed since 1921 the percentage from the state schools has fallen below the 16.32 per cent average each year. It is also worthy of note that most of the institutions listed in the third group, "independent colleges and universities," that produced 26.42 per cent of these missionaries, are institutions with distinct Christian emphasis.

Thus do the Christian colleges continue to be the pre-eminent sources of the Christian leadership for both the Church and society at large.

### III

How do these educational institutions affiliated with the Church accord with the changing emphases in educational aims and methods? Constant readjustment to a changing environment is the price of life both for the individual and for the institution. Are these schools by their nature capable or incapable of moving with the modern educational trends that commend themselves in theory and practice as sound? Do they find themselves in their inherent aims and preferred methods out of step with educational progress or essentially harmonious with it? The answer to this inquiry will determine the degree of confidence we may justly hold with respect to the continuance of this type of educational institution as a significant element in the educational system of the future.

What are the changing emphases in educational aims and methods that require adjustments and readjustments upon the part of educational institutions?

There are at least seven such changes noticeable. It is not claiming too much to say that each one of them in some measure is a vindication of an aim or method that has particularly characterized the church college and an effort either to restore or to augment that aim or method for general educational use.

First, there is in education generally a larger recognition

being given to ethical and spiritual elements. It is true that materialistic and irreligious influences run in mighty currents through college halls and across college campuses. But their very volume and violence has awakened alarm and protest and counter-effort. The tides of religious idealism are being more definitely encouraged and are growing in strength. For significant evidence consider the character education movement in public education, the epochal declaration of the aims of secondary education formulated by the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association,<sup>1</sup> the encouragement of religious work upon their campuses by tax-supported institutions, the enlarging recognition given to religion by these same schools in their curricula, their conferences, and in their extension service.<sup>2</sup>

Second, there is today a larger recognition and utilization of orientation courses. The church colleges have stood for broader outlook, wider knowledge, and more liberal culture as against a predominance of special, narrow, technical courses. The movement toward orientation courses is a vindication of this ideal, and is all to the good so far as the church college is concerned.

A third change in educational aim and method is witnessed in the development of honors courses. This in essence is a movement to limit and to supplement the all too prevalent pouring-in or formal lecture method. The movement is consonant with the aims and genius of the church college.

A fourth trend in modern education consists in the higher appraisal now given the teacher. The colleges are calling for real teachers, and the graduate schools are giving increased attention to those essential aspects of a teacher's training that lie beyond mere technical skill. In all this the church college

<sup>1</sup> *Sixth Yearbook*, Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association—Report of Commission on Curriculum for Secondary Schools.

<sup>2</sup> For an up-to-date and most significant report on the attitude of state universities toward religion consult *University of Iowa Studies*, Vol. I, Number 3.

may well rejoice, and be heartened in its own traditional exaltation of the teacher.

The influence of the earnest, noble, vital teacher is never lost. The personal friendship of such a teacher and his pride in the student's work are among the most vitalizing influences that can be brought to bear upon a student's life. In the colleges devoted exclusively or chiefly to undergraduate work, the emphasis has always been upon the teacher. Nothing obscures him; he is at the center; he stands or falls according to the merit of his work. Such conditions appeal to real teachers and account for their presence in such large numbers in the small colleges. In the best of these colleges the ablest and most skillful teachers have charge of the fundamental courses for underclassmen.

In the liberal arts colleges of large universities, buildings, laboratories, multiplied technical courses, and huge enrollments often obscure the teacher and tend to deprive him of his real opportunity. There the research work of faculty members and of graduate students tends to overshadow all else and monopolize the best talent and the major attention. The result is that the underclassman rarely is privileged to enroll under the department heads and the outstanding teachers, but more often under instructors and assistants who themselves are young inexperienced graduate students just recently from college. Furthermore, on such faculties there are many technically trained men and women who lack the breadth of outlook and of understanding and the strength of personality necessary for effective undergraduate teaching. These facts are frankly acknowledged and deplored by educators. But improvement has come, if at all, very slowly.

Fifth, there is coming a new emphasis upon the educational significance of faculty-student relationships. In the colleges devoted exclusively or chiefly to undergraduate work, large emphasis has always been placed upon this educational factor. The wider recognition of its importance now in evidence is heartening.

It is finding its chief organized expression through commit-

tees or departments of personnel service. One university clearly defines the purpose of this personnel work in the statement that an effective advisory and counseling service aims "to reestablish the student-faculty relationship said to have existed in the small college and supposedly lost as a direct result of increase in enrollment."<sup>3</sup>

A sixth movement in higher education is the effort to break up the large student masses into smaller units. Many large colleges in America—Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and others—are now seeking residential and tutorial devices by which they may reorganize their masses into smaller units. In so doing they seek to recapture what is an inherent advantage of the smaller college.

The seventh change affecting the church college is the movement sponsored by the accrediting associations to modify and supplement the present standards for accrediting the various types of institutions. The effort is to find standards that shall be in the highest possible degree revealing and promotive of genuine educational values.

Considering the entire seven changes, it is obvious that they not only vindicate the dominant aims and methods of the church college, but that they also challenge that institution to make good these aims and methods as never before.

#### IV

In this effort to answer the inquiry to what extent the educational institution is to remain an agent in the work of the Church we have thus far in the discussion come to three conclusions: first, the developments and realignments in the educational system do not preclude the continuance of the church supported educational institution as a major factor in American education; second, the church schools continue to be the pre-eminent sources of successful men; and third, the church college is being strongly vindicated by the present emphases in educational aims and methods.

<sup>3</sup> *Problems of College Education*, p. 266. University of Minnesota Press.

It yet remains to ask the question most vital of all to the inquiry, namely, just how may these church educational institutions serve the program of the coming Church?

The program of the Church has not changed. It is a program aiming to leaven humanity with the Christian ideals and thus to change human society into a Kingdom of God. That calls for the clarifying of the Christian principles which in turn calls for Christian teachers, Christian teaching and the exemplification of the Christian principles in human relationships. Can the church supported educational institution effectively function in carrying out such a program?

First, let us begin our answer to this question by reaffirming our belief in the fundamental soundness of the view commonly held that the most essentially distinctive thing about the church college lies in its freedom to avow and to seek to exemplify an ideal of education that includes the facing and the utilizing of the religious element in life. It is this influence of religion that has humanized and vitalized these institutions and made possible the stream of leadership they send forth. Its refining and quickening presence in these schools chiefly explains the confidence which the people have reposed in them as expressed by gifts of money and especially by the commitment to them of their sons and daughters. It is, too, this religious element in these schools that has made them such a leavening force in the total educational life of the nation. They have held American education from total secularization and are increasingly influencing it toward an ideal of education that shall seek to see life whole and shall take account of all its interests.

In the second place, it must be frankly acknowledged that a number of factors combine to make the ideal of Christian education increasingly difficult of attainment in our schools and upon our campuses. Indeed, these factors that militate against the attainment of our ideals of Christian education often obscure and sometimes almost eclipse the very vision of those ideals themselves.

What are these factors? There are at least four. First may

be mentioned the difficulty of securing teachers who possess both the educational equipment and the personality qualities required for approximation to our ideals of Christian education. In the second place the problem is greatly complicated, in comparison with that confronted by these same schools in the past, by the heterogeneous nature of their student bodies. Students with the most diverse religious backgrounds, and many with none at all, now emigrate to these campuses. In the case of some of these schools, because of favorable location or of strength of program, these aliens rush in upon their own initiative; in the case of others, because of poor location or unattractiveness of program, these various and sundry groups are enticed and bribed to come in that the classrooms may not be too vacant. But whether their presence in any school is accounted for by too many or too few students, that presence makes a consistent, effective program of Christian education more difficult of attainment. A third hindering factor is the heavy demand made upon the time and energy of the administrations by the financial necessities of modern educational institutions. And a fourth difficulty lies in the general religious confusion of our times. Knowledge is developing and spreading very rapidly, and every major human interest and institution is in unrest, is being reëxamined, retested, refashioned. At such a time the task of organizing and making effective an intellectually clear and spiritually vital program of Christian thought and practice is distinctly more difficult.

But though the difficulties in the way of its attainment are real, the central goal for the Christian educational institution remains clear. The chief justification for the church's presence in the field of higher education lies in her ability to exemplify an education quickened and ennobled by the Christian ideals and the Christian spirit. The Church's institutions are untrammelled in this needed work of developing the ideal of full-orbed education which must include the frankest recognition of Christianity as by all odds the most dynamic factor in progress and must seek its fullest realization in the individual life. These



Christian educational institutions have already rendered to our nation a great service at this point both through the lives of the students they have helped train and through the leaven of their wholesome influence upon public education. Yet with full and grateful recognition given to these facts we cannot escape the conviction that Protestant Christian education is challenged as never before to make good on this major plank in its platform. The general condition of our times in every field makes this challenge. A generation at once inspired and confused by unparalleled transitions, fraught alike with hope and with peril, has the right to expect from the Christian educational institution, which is set upon a hill and cannot be hid, both intellectual and spiritual help. Where outside the college is there an equal opportunity and hence an equal responsibility for developing the implications of the Christian philosophy of life and for a larger utilization of its dynamic?

Unless that central purpose be kept steadily in view and be frequently reclarified by the Christian educational institution it cannot serve the Church as it should. Moreover to the clear acceptance of that central purpose there need to be added definite plans and programs for its realization in the actual life of the institution. The means for the attainment of the ideal are quite as essential as the ideal itself. Without going into detailed consideration of plans and agencies that have proven or may prove advantageous in the Christian life of an educational institution let us observe a few of the more essential ones.

First and foremost is the Christian teacher. The oft-repeated statement that a teacher committed to the Christian philosophy of life and quite well qualified to interpret and to exemplify it to others is the most essential factor in the Christian school commands general assent. That statement has two implications for the administration and faculty of a Christian school: first, that only such teachers be employed, and second, that united efforts in study, discussion, and service should be made by a faculty to clarify its Christian thinking and to increase its Christian influence. We believe that every school that calls itself

Christian should summon whatever of courage is necessary and put forth whatever of effort is needed frankly to face these implications and be governed by them.

Second, the curricular offerings both in content and in method of presentation call for wise and constant attention. While the total curricular offerings in Bible, religious education, and Christian philosophy have been greatly increased in the church colleges in the last two decades it still remains true that most of the graduates go out with very inadequate training in these subjects. This is chiefly accounted for by two facts, namely, that most of the students take but one or two courses in these departments and that those courses are generally quite narrow in content and technical in nature.

A few orientation courses in these fields would reach more students and get better results. These courses should not be material-centered but problem-centered. They should be handled by teachers qualified to teach youths and not merely qualified to teach factual courses. No other departments of learning offer so fine an opportunity to make experience the basis of the curriculum as do these. Such a readjustment of the offerings in these departments of the Christian colleges should be made during the next decade as will place them in the very forefront of leadership in education conceived as the continuous reconstruction of experience.

Moreover the entire curriculum, and not merely the offerings just discussed, is the proper instrument for the Christian purpose of the college. In so far as any study deals with ways of living and with the essential values of life itself, with what we think of life, its meanings and issues, it is religious, and as contributing to the student's philosophy of life, should be permeated with the Christian interpretations of values. Any aim less than this is not high enough to fulfill the concept of a Christian college.

And third, since the Christian life is so central in the goal and program of a Christian school and since in proportion to its genuineness it permeates every phase of school work and

school relationships, it requires constant study upon the part of all those related to the school program both curricular and extra-curricular. To make such concerted study possible there is needed in every institution a Council on Religious Life and Program constituted of representatives from administration, faculty, Christian organizations, school clubs and societies, school classes, churches contingent to the campus and from the supporting church territory.

With a faculty committed to the Christian philosophy of life and unitedly seeking a clear interpretation and a completer realization of it, with a curriculum carefully organized and studied with reference to Christian implications and with all campus forces cooperating to achieve a Christian community, the Christian college has yet its greatest contribution to make to society in nurturing religious life and transcending bigotry and narrow sectarianism.

The charge has been made against the colleges as a class that they have been narrow in their religious influence, so denominational in their attitude as to be a very divisive factor in our civilization. It has been pointed out how in frequent instances they have stood against scientific methods and rejected scientific results, and in so doing have been a clog upon civilization. Others, on the other hand, have pointed to the college as the greatest influence in furthering the religious interests of humanity. There is truth in both of these contentions; the college must plead measurably guilty to both charges. The religious opportunity and life of a college is a point from which it may swing, for good or for evil, far in either direction.

Every considerable cult and denomination and "ism" which has blessed or afflicted men has founded its own schools. Those schools have in each instance interpreted the cult, trained leaders for it, and thus perpetuated it. An unfriendly critic of the schools with a religious emphasis might look upon all that and declare that these schools were to blame, then, for all the lingering superstition and the babel of faiths and the consequent divisions which have afflicted Christendom. A deeper

look at this matter, however, will reveal the fact that these schools and colleges have always been ahead, or soon got ahead, of their supporters; the fact that in the thoughtful atmosphere of the school the tendency has been to rise above the false, the insignificant, the incidental, and more and more to put emphasis upon the central, vital matters. Thus these schools and colleges have led these groups closer together. That accounts for the notable unity today in Protestantism.

In all this striving of religious faith to rise to its own, then, in all this of noble flight and of blind groping, the Christian colleges get to themselves a compliment in that they have worked ahead of their respective groups and have more and more led these groups toward unity. That is not merely a compliment that comes to them out of history; it is a guiding principle as well. Along that line and in that same procedure must continue to be one of their great contributions.

### *Conclusions*

The Christian Church has always utilized the educational institution as one of its primary agencies.

The developments and realignments in the educational system, while greatly affecting the scope and character of work done in the educational institutions affiliated with the Church, do not preclude their continuance as a major factor in American education.

The Christian college continues to be the pre-eminent source of the Christian leadership for both the Church and society at large.

The current changing emphases in educational aims and methods vindicate the dominant aims and methods of the church college and challenge that institution to make good these aims and methods even more fully than in the past.

The supreme opportunity and hence the supreme responsibility in modern society for clarifying the Christian philosophy of life and for exemplifying its dynamic today centers upon the campus of the Christian college.

*The Church in Tax-Supported Colleges*<sup>\*</sup>

No survey of the educational program of the church would be complete without some reference to the work that is being done among students in tax-supported institutions. In keeping with the principle of the complete separation of church and state, courses in Bible and religion and specific efforts to promote or direct the religious life of students in tax-supported colleges were strictly avoided until within quite recent years. The churches directed their attention primarily toward promoting attendance in the denominational colleges and in general paid little attention to the students in the state colleges and universities. There was a period during which denominational leaders vigorously opposed the state colleges as "godless institutions" and endeavored to dissuade the young people from the churches enrolling in such institutions.

The fact that the state college was able to offer college instruction at a purely nominal tuition cost for the student made it inevitable that increasing numbers of students should be drawn from the denominational colleges into the colleges supported by public taxation. For a generation or more before the war the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association had been particularly active in the state school centers. While these organizations were organized independently of the college administration and were financed by voluntary contributions from faculty and students, they gradually came to assume the character of auxiliary agencies of the colleges dealing particularly with personal problems and rendering valuable service, both to the students and to the college administration. In many institutions ways were found of providing what amounted to practical subsidies for the Christian Associations by the college administration.

With the development of active Christian Associations on practically all of the college campuses of America the organized

<sup>\*</sup> These pages are added to Dr. Kirk's article by the editor as an additional note.

church could not long remain indifferent to the religious welfare of the students who were enrolled in the tax-supported colleges. The remarkable success of the Student Volunteer Movement in recruiting candidates for missionary service from state as well as denominational colleges called pointed attention to the fact that in the state colleges was a rich field the cultivation of which had been largely neglected by the church. For some years before the World War various denominations had begun experimenting with the appointment of "College Pastors" or "Student Pastors" as they were variously called. Sometimes these men were added as "Assistants" or "Associates" to the staff of churches located adjacent to the campus. Sometimes they were established more or less independent of any particular college church. With the coming of the flood-tide of economic prosperity, due to the abnormal condition created by the war, and under the psychology of the mass movement in support of charitable and religious enterprises, came the beginning of the establishment of student Foundations. The Methodist Episcopal Church began organizing "Wesley Foundations." The Presbyterians set up "Westminster Foundations." The Roman Catholic Church established "Newman Foundations." The Jewish bodies promoted "Hillel Foundations." Practically all of the major denominational groups formed similar organizations.

The program centered in a College Pastor who gave full time to organizing and directing the program of the church among students in the college. On many campuses the foundations were housed in rather elaborate buildings providing rooms for recreation, for worship and for religious classes, as well as living quarters for the college pastor and his assistants. In some colleges and the denominations united in a cooperative program, each providing a specially trained worker who united with the other denominational representatives in developing a unified religious program on the campus. The University of Pennsylvania presents the most notable example of his type of cooperative program. The University of Illinois offers an example of

the most ambitious building program as yet undertaken by the various denominations represented on the campus. Throughout the whole area in which this form of religious work has been developing there has been maintained a spirit of generous cooperation and consistent effort to present a united religious front to the college constituency. With the growth of the denominational programs on the campus the interdenominational student Christian Associations have fallen somewhat into the background. Many of the purely campus service activities, such as employment bureaus, room-finding agencies, and personal counselling, which were initiated by the Christian Associations have been taken over and are now being maintained by the college administrations. An increasing number of state colleges are adding faculty Directors of Religious Life who aim to coordinate the programs of the religious groups represented on the campus and foster a wholesome type of religious life throughout the college. Consequently there are an increasing number of those who are in direct contact with the colleges of America who are questioning if, perhaps, the old type of Christian Associations are not likely to give place to the combination of cooperating denominational leadership and active administrative agencies seeking to promote the religious interests of the students.

At the present time there is hardly a college of any consequence anywhere in the United States where some form of religious leadership is not being promoted and maintained, either by denominational foundations or interdenominational cooperation. The movement has begun to spread abroad. Similar foundations have been established at some of the larger student centers of the Orient. While the sharp decline in denominational resources which followed the collapse of the inflated war-time prosperity has compelled retrenchment in many centers, it seems certain that the type of combination of religious and educational leadership represented by these student Foundations is certain to become one of the most significant and fruitful forms of religious activity in America.

One of the collateral products of this revived concern for the religious life of the students in the tax-supported colleges has been the addition of courses in Bible and religion which are offered with full college credit to students in the institutions. In some instances the teaching is done by the denominational representatives. In a considerable number of colleges various denominational groups have established "chairs" for such religious instruction. In a number of institutions such "chairs" have developed into fully organized colleges affiliated with the state school. The most notable example of this is found at the University of Missouri. In other institutions the various religious groups have united in a cooperative support of one or more instructors. The typical arrangement is that which maintains at least three instructors, one representing the Roman Catholic, one the Protestant and one the Jewish group. At the University of Iowa, the School of Religion, which was organized and is supported by voluntary contributions from these three major religious groups has been incorporated as an integral part of the university, with the exception that the support of the work is still provided from extra-college funds. An increasing number of state institutions are adding courses in Bible, in Philosophy of Religion, in Psychology of Religion and kindred subjects to their regular curriculum. It seems certain that whatever the particular form in which it may be organized and supported the college curriculum of America will be permanently enriched by an increasing number of such definitely religious courses.



## XVIII

### TYPES AND TENDENCIES IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

ELMER GUY CUTSHALL

IN common with all forms of advanced direct education through schools, theological education, the training of priests and Protestant ministers for their respective churches, selects teachers, obtains buildings and grounds, sets up curricula, defines the ruling objective, and by the use of books, lectures, observations, discussions, collateral readings, self study, logical analysis, research and supervision, proceeds to the task.

In general, education, on its social side, is the attempt to select, increase, hasten, concentrate and direct the flow of experience from one generation to another. Good education endows the subsequent generation with worthy increases in experience and enables it, so to speak, to stand on the shoulders of the past and meet successfully the problem of heightened human living.

Theological education is likewise concerned with the flow of human experience. It specializes in directing religious experience. It attempts to train leaders for Christianity's march with the movement of generations of men. It uses religious ideas, religious history, religious experience, religious ritual and music, religious education and psychology, religious symbols and practice for purposes personal and social, inspirational and practical.

Two distinct and characteristic types of theological education are found in the European and American Church. In between these two types, or models, range diverse modifications of each

and varied combinations of both. Each distinct model or type is determined by the conception of authority which pervades the religious experience which each is intended to express, direct, create and conserve. The Roman Catholic Church furnishes an example of the one and the modern ultra-liberal theological school an example of the other. There are many distinct specimens of both. Each is creature and creator of the religious experience respectively germane to it. Each partakes of the spirit and logic of the respective churches served.

Antithetical are these two models. One rests authority outside of man, the other inside. One uses deductive logic primarily, the other inductive. One makes large use of miracles, the other takes extensive command of "resident resources." One uses the fact finding machinery of the syllogism, the other the fact obtaining instruments of studied experience. One is medieval, the other is modern. One uses theological education meticulously to perpetuate a closed system, the other to refund and redirect religious experience. One ties the present with the budding future back into the dogmatic precipitates of past experience, the other studies all past systems as markers for the present and future with vital experience guiding the entire throbbing process.

The motives and curricula of each type of theological education obtain *esprit de corps* ultimately from the philosophy of authority dominating the experience and traditions of the makers of each. When religious experience rests upon external bases one drive in theological education prevails, the high church drive. When religion resides upon inner needs and grows out of man's religious responses to environment with experience moving in the direction of the most fruitful leads, theological education falls into the strictly modern empirical mold. Supermundanism constructs one school and the religious laboratory its opposite. The logical cleavage between the two is sharp, irrevocable, and clearly apparent. In the one educational method and curricula are formal and essentially fixed, in the other open and ever modified by successive experiments. The one aims to

produce an accurate duplicate of the past, the other an able conservator of the present and creator of the future.

Very strictly speaking, the homogeneity of each attempt or system is relative. The closed system of the Roman Catholic is not quite closed. The open system of the other is not quite open. Each has a minimum number of aspects that flow from the logic and temper of the other. Casuistry and agile extension of old dogmas to new situations, give to the former the aspect of the laboratory. Unconscious, deep-seated, and unquestioned mental assumptions give the aspect of dogmatism to the other at its best. Each deals with directed and set-up experience. In each the past speaks, for, in some of life's uncharted movements, there is nothing else vocal. Each deals with vast constituencies that take the word of the religious leader as final. The so-called enlightened man's naïve acceptance of the words of the critical scholar of repute is no less blind than the Roman Catholic layman's acceptance of the words of his priest. The one claims knowledge, the other does not, and in this the chief difference rests. In the liberal group, so-called, there are hosts of men who will deny that six plus six equals twelve if the declaration is made by one not of their party and will consent to the statement that five plus five equals eleven if announcement is made by one of their intellectual idols. However, the fact that the average human being is pathetically weak in finding his own way independently does not discourage many in making what seems to them a fine attempt and does not cause the liberal leader to deny them the right to try. In the long run great gains may come from weak attempts, blind attempts, if enough are made in a society free enough to permit gleaned individual and social experimentation.

Much education of the advanced type in preparation for the Protestant ministry is a mixture of the theory, logic, and practice of the two systems briefly described in contrasting words. The conservative, orthodox, Protestant attempt is essentially catholic and has very little logical ground of its own upon which to stand. This may be its strength or weakness depending upon

one's point of view. The liberal protestant attempt stays pretty close to the other model herein depicted. A large number of schools in the middle ground between the two combine the dogmatism of the Roman Catholic with the empiricism of the other, obtaining as a resultant, the leader who thinks essentially as a Catholic and makes use of science in programming his church.

There are elements of strength and weakness in both models. The Catholic logic is clear and definite and builds a system that rescues men from life's otherwise stark and cold realities. It has a rescue philosophy and its priests are trained for mental, metaphysical and social rescue work; mental in their psychiatry through the confessional, metaphysical in their doctrine and practice of the eucharist, social in their stalwart championing of the common man's right to work. The Catholic avoids the mental and religious fads that prey upon the uncloistered masses. His church looks ahead a century at a time and keeps working toward a definite goal which does not change with the change in personnel. Its program of theological education gains advantage from traditions that steadily gain momentum with a minimum of lost motion characterizing the continuous attempt.

From the point of view of the Catholic there are few heavy weaknesses in its system of ministerial training. Such as persist are temporal, local, and accidental and not of the stuff of the process itself. That the goal is achieved is declared by the relative success of the church, an organization that would fade out in a century but for the tremendous achievement of its theological program in creating the men who from time to time and generation to generation actually constitute said church. And these men are trained in the heart and not the periphery of its tradition. The renewal of faith is of maximum conservativeness and of minimum departure. The weakness of this theological attempt is its failure to square its curriculum content with the best findings of philosophy growing out of the data furnished by modern science.

Ultra-liberal theological education is strong where the Catholic

attempt is weak, namely its extensive use of the findings of modern science. These findings may purge religion of much of its folly and make believe, its untenable beliefs and foolish practices. This purging makes religion attractive to men and women of modern training, who exert a very strong influence in public interest, an influence out of all proportion to numbers. The danger of this attempt is in making its students believe, a superstition quite as foolish as some eliminated by said attempt, that religion is essentially a set of ideas, and that its highest good is in having from time to time the latest, "up to the minute" set. It often overlooks the truth that experience is more than concepts and hence religious experience more than correct conceptions. It exhibits some of the weaknesses of all efforts that overemphasize the analytical function, or better said, that merely intellectualize the educational attempt.

### *Some Tendencies*

Certain vitally progressive schools in a growing section of American Protestantism are attempting to base religious belief upon a world view furnished by modern science and thought which will conserve the abiding sanctions of Christianity. Also they are keenly alert to the gifts of modern education and psychology which furnished the minister with up to date tools. They seek to serve the church through all that is sound in Christian experience and practice, past and present. Avoidance of both archaic ideas and the substitution of religious photography for religious life, is sought. Neither the intellectual climate of the thirteenth century nor the dispassionate encampment for study in classified museums of religion is idealized. The chaste illusion that explanation outranks possession is discarded. Emphasis upon the life of loving fellowship with and devotion to God is persistent. That through Jesus Christ men come into the full exercise of the religious life is an unquestioned motto. The personal and social aspects of Christian experience are equally stressed. The play of religion upon the entire psychic life is affirmed. The whole world of experience

is used in illustrating and enforcing religious truths. The method of directed experimentation is honored. The coming of the kingdom of God through education, reform, legislation, evangelism and the fine and mechanical arts is believed. The presence of the spirit of God in the lives of men as a directing force in history is held.

Reinforcement of the purpose to train men and women for effective, practical leadership is increasingly in evidence. A theological school is not primarily an institution for producing scholars but scholarly ministers. It does not desire to create research experts but searching preachers of the Gospel. It aims not at giving knowledge of religion but in stimulating knowing possessors of Christian experience. It would not encourage men to stand apart as lofty critics of Christian tradition, but rather as close up critical finders of God's mind for themselves and their age. It does not exist to train psychologists, critical biblical students, philosophers of religion, and masters of Christian history, etc., but, entirely, persons who will use these and other indispensable human experiences in helping men, women, children and youth in achieving the finest Christian experience and practice.

Its aim therefore is the production of the man who in turn will know that his chief aim is to help men practice the presence of God. The secondary aims of this man's church by and large are education, charity and reform. These aims are the overflow of life generated by emphasis upon the primary aim. They exercise faith in the ways of creating better believers and better conditions in which to believe. They keep faith from cloud gazing and faith keeps them from falling in on themselves like an old and neglected well. This man will never lose sight of the primary task of the minister. The law of diminishing emotional returns will not dry up his own emotional life through making the uncommon verities common by a careless and matter of fact familiarity. He will not specialize in "goat feathers" but in worship, ritual, private prayer, inspiring sermons, sympathetic pastoring, and, when needed, aggressive pub-

lic service. He will not engage in so many reform fights that he will lose the war against a materialism which unchecked and untransformed dries up the wells of the spirit. The care and cultivation of man's religious life is his supreme challenge.

The growing purpose of the modern theological school to produce a man whose aim will be religious, and very practically so, reflects certain tendencies in modern ministerial education that bring new interests into the curriculum, which in turn call for curriculum content eliminations and additions, modifications of teaching method, and the practice of some new approaches to the task. There is a steady tendency away from the dominance of biblical studies over the courses, required and elective, which lead to the degree.

When the inductive method of study began its early work of world mastery in astronomy and then moved out into physics and chemistry it met with opposition, stiff opposition, but not the opposition of later years when it came to encompass living subjects, both animals and man. Its bitterest opposition finally came in the fields of the biblical and social sciences. Stormy protests filled the religious sky when it refused to go around the study of religion and sacred literature and insisted on including these intimate matters in its all-embracing grasp. At this time theological curricula were taking shape in many schools and biblical criticism became the "pillar of cloud by day" and "pillar of fire by night" of the fashioners of the content of study. Paucity of extra-biblical material, interest in biblical studies intensified by the strain and stress of the controversy raging around and in the critical study of the scriptures, men prepared and ready to teach, men of fine scholarly tastes, loaded the curriculum with biblical studies and this loading has prevailed almost up to the present hour. Now the biblical subjects are giving way to make room in the curriculum for extra-biblical materials. This movement will not go too far, for a certain minimum amount of careful study of Christianity's great book and its setting prepares the minister for sermonizing, spiritual interpretation, deepening of the religious life, and the

making of mental contacts with his people through a medium understood and appreciated, theoretically at least, by all.

Systematic Theology, from the beginning, holding a strong place in the curriculum, is becoming more pliable in content and more inductive in attack. Whereas formerly the thought movement was from the idea of God to human experience through a series of logical deductions and theological speculations, now, the beginnings of study are in an inventory of man's nature, needs and experiences, with thought empirically constructing an idea of God that will satisfy the needs of said human experience. Systematic Christian thought has enlarged its inclusion of scientific data to assist it in making this basic inventory. Likewise it is making increased use of metaphysics as the handmaiden of its task. In doing this it is bringing into play the philosophy of religion and sharing with it the place in the systematic thought content of the courses of study formerly occupied by formal theology alone. The coming of the philosophy of religion has brought new inclusions such as history of religion, psychology of religion and emphasis upon social ethics.

The most striking, and perhaps most characteristic, inclusions of the modern theological school have to do with courses of study intended to increase the skill of the candidate. Religious education plays a very important rôle here, centering in the attempt to help the student understand the science and possibilities of human educability. The psychology of childhood and adolescence, the principles of religious education, the principles of correct curriculum making for religious education purposes, and the science of organization, supervision and practice are studied. Having passed through the stages of over-confidence and over-emphasis religious education, no longer a fad or an academic plaything with which to startle the natives, has settled down to the hard task of assisting general education and evangelism in evolving a better individual and a better social medium. It places at the disposal of Christian purpose valuable helps for producing the desired individual. The professor



in charge supervises the educational practice of students serving small churches as student pastors or working as assistants to the senior pastor in large churches.

Under the head of courses intended to augment skill and benefit practice the modern school lists courses in Homiletics, Pastoral Science, Rural and City Sociology, Social Clinic Work, etc., in addition to the courses in Religious Education. In all, the attempt is to produce a practical man, one who can do, as well as think, and be. Expert supervision of the student's pastoral activities is making a successful bid for the attention of the theological educators. Sermon construction and delivery and pastoral calling and counseling, for many years having had a growing place in the curriculum, are getting much attention, and considerable collateral aid from many new interests and fields. Growing emphasis is being given to the opportunity of preparing men and women for special fields of Christian work such as missions, social settlement enterprises, teaching in Christian schools, boy scout activities, evangelism, making religious surveys and church architecture. The Iliff School is beginning the interesting experiment of having a District Superintendent of the Denver District as Lecturer in Pastoral Science, who is giving two required courses each year, the course in supervision extending through three of the four quarter periods.

The human material coming to a theological school is of supreme interest in carrying out its central desire. Practically all schools of accredited standing are requesting college graduation for entrance. The men now coming are younger and better trained than formerly. The ease with which they make the adjustments, theological, in the first year of study testifies favorably to the good work done in the colleges and universities from which they come. The quick and deep-minded men are ever welcome. Those who fall below the average are not sought and in some instances forbidden. There is no place in the Christian ministry for the dullard. For the most part, recruits come from the farms, villages and small towns. Very few have enough money to pay expenses while in the course of study. Scholar-

ships and pastoral work furnish most of the funds needed to supplement their meager resources. In many instances the call to preach is testified by the sacrifice of all comforts and the margins on necessities. They are of average social culture with fair command of the mother tongue. Most are lacking in training in philosophy and foreign languages. They are free from that morbid over-seriousness which saddened and depressed many men of their type a generation ago. The sense of humor seems to be on the increase. For the most part, they shine the heels of their shoes. A goodly proportion are single and this is a blessing both to them and the schools because, and only because, of the financial problem.

Public interest in theological education is not lacking. This interest, however, by no means equals the interest in college training. The human connections between the public and the theological school are necessarily limited. There are no athletic features to draw attention and give popular color. The average layman does not take the long quiet look required to see the supreme importance for 1950 of well trained young ministers starting properly their work in 1920. Consequently, this type of school depends largely upon a few interested founders and givers, of large means. Increasingly the Protestant church fostering the type of school herein discussed is becoming interested in a better trained ministry. The increase in the learning of the pew demands it. The growing complexity, not futility, of religious programs and problems dictates it. The needs of consolidation through a broader leadership solicit it. The modern School of Theology is not out to produce more ministers but better ones.

The advantages of theological education are apparent to all who are informed and interested. Reflective study of the history, content, tools and purposes of religion furnishes a minister with many of the externals of his needed equipment. There are items of needed equipment in which the school is entirely helpless. It cannot give him a satisfying religious experience. It is with difficulty that the student keeps the fervor of what reli-

gious life he brings while in intensive and critical study. Analysis dries up the emotions, checks the will, and tends to remove one from the love of people. This is true unless definite provisions for recuperation are made. Daily chapel worship and daily devotions are only in part a corrective. The supreme anomaly of theological training is the fact that the more one studies religion the less one has to study. This is the testimony of student after student who really reveals his inner mind. But only for a short period. Thrust out into practice with all the difficulties therein, the young minister soon regains his former zeal and religious drive. Difficulties on his charge, properly met, are good evangelists, and generally bring the return of power and life to men given to critical study. There is never any danger that the minister will be too scholarly, only the danger of being merely scholarly.

## XIX

### THE COUNTRY CHURCH IN A CHANGING WORLD

MARK A. DAWBER

THE world has changed. It is still changing. Hardly a thing remains of the days of our childhood. All around us are the evidences of a new world that is making new and greater demands upon individuals and institutions. The test of an individual's or an institution's worth and fitness to survive is its ability to adjust itself to a new environment. The other day we spent a few hours in the Field Museum in Chicago. There we saw the remains of animals that once roamed this earth. They are now only to be found in the form of skeletons in a museum. As we came out of the museum we saw other animals whose ancestors also roamed this earth when the giants now skeletons were living. You ask the reason why one group survived and the other became extinct. The answer is that one group was able to adjust itself to a changing environment. This is the history of the animal kingdom. It is also the story of the human kingdom both as to its individuals and also its institutions.

#### *The Church No Exception*

Institutions that fail to adjust themselves to the changing needs of the times decay and perish. The church is no exception. There unfortunately exists an idea that the church is a divine institution and is not affected by the conditions that make such drastic change in every other realm. This is not so. The only thing about a church that is divine is its spirit. Sometimes

the value of this is lost because the church does not recognize the changing situation and adapt itself to the new day.

The country church is exposed to this peril in a peculiar way. Owing to the very nature of the case it is retarded by conditions of conservatism and leadership consequent upon limited resources and it is not to be wondered at if the rural churches have not made progress. However, in the light of the difficulties that have confronted it there have been remarkable achievements wrought by hundreds of rural churches. Our desire here is to examine the situation in which the rural church finds itself today and to suggest some steps that might be of value in leading out in a program for the new day.

### *Change*

The changes that have taken place have affected rural life and the rural church in a very marked degree. Education, transportation, means of communication, the revolution in farm machinery and the effect of an intensified industrial system upon labor and wages have brought about an entirely new situation with new and difficult problems for the country church.

The change in our economic life is probably the most far reaching. Most of the rural churches were located and organized out of an economic life that was confined to a five-mile radius. In many instances it could be said that the economic life was complete within each farm home. It would be very difficult to say what the economic reach is today. For the most part, it is world wide. The country communities are affected by the economic factors from every corner of the globe. The church, the school and the social life of the country were organized to meet the needs of the limited area of an economic life that obtained twenty to fifty years ago. We are rapidly moving out with our educational program and are adapting it to the larger community with sufficient resources to provide an adequate educational program for the children and youth of the country. Sometimes, this new educational community takes in the whole county. This is especially true of the high school group.

In the matter of the social life this has been absolutely shattered. It would be very difficult to set down just what constitutes the community of interests as represented by the social life of rural people. That it is no longer confined to the limits of the five-mile radius of twenty years ago, certainly will not be disputed. For the most part, it is commercialized and the coming of the automobile has made it possible for country people to become an integral part of the social life of the large town and city. Many rural people are traveling twenty to fifty miles for their amusement and social life. This enlargement of the educational and social reach of the rural community constitutes the root problem of the country church. It must now find a way to become an integral part of this large community. Furthermore, it is impossible to obtain the support necessary to run a strong church from the limited area of life for which many of them were organized. A community of two hundred people could support a church twenty years ago, now it requires five times that number to provide the basis of support for a church where the pastor's salary is fifteen hundred dollars and the other items that would be included in the budget of a church of this type. So that the one outstanding need confronting the rural church in America is that of reorganizing itself so as to provide fewer but stronger churches, cooperating to serve the new and enlarged natural communities that have been developed during the last fifteen to twenty years. If all the rural churches should burn down over night, half of them would never be replaced, and the rest would be relocated to better meet the needs of the new day, having regard to the new centers of life as represented by the economic, social and educational changes that have taken place.

#### THE COUNTRY COMMUNITY AND THE CHURCH

The new and enlarged community demands a different program in its religious institutions. We are fully conscious that the church is surrounded by forces that make it more difficult for it to move out rapidly into the new day. Tradition, senti-

ment, theology, creed and doctrines and ecclesiastical machinery have bound her hand and foot and made it exceedingly difficult for her to take her place in the progressive rural social movements. These chains are gradually being removed and there are numerous evidences of rural churches taking the forward step in the social reconstruction of rural community life.

The important step toward this goal is that the church shall discover a sufficient field of resources both in people and economic support so as to make possible this large program of service.

The second imperative in meeting the larger community demands is that the church shall recognize the other community institutions that have come into existence in recent years. The program of the country church must be an integral part of the larger community program in which the other educational and social institutions are operating for the welfare of rural people. The church cannot do it alone; it is vital to the whole social movement of the countryside that the church shall conceive of its task not as separate and apart from other agencies but as the one institution to bind into a complete community whole the other institutions and thus make possible a larger and more complete community life.

To this end it is highly important that pastors and church leaders find some common ground with the leaders of social agencies and agricultural organizations in which the needs of rural organization may be considered as a unit, and a program devised in which the several institutions will not be working at cross purposes, but in which each will make the kind of contribution they are best able to make, with the maximum of unity and a minimum of division and waste.

There is a further consideration that should be kept clearly in mind. The church is a community institution, has been so regarded in our national life, and because of this fact it has been protected as no other institution unless it is the public school. It has been relieved of taxation and consequently is obligated to justify its existence as a community agency, serving without

prejudice the community that has provided for its protection at this point.

Again, very few rural churches are provided for in their total support by their membership. Most rural churches are dependent upon the larger constituency of the community for support for their budget. Apart from their status as institutions of religion, but considered on the basis of their obligation to the community in general, they are indebted to the extent of sharing in the social enterprise of community development. Granting the primary responsibility of the church is that of the proclaimer of the Gospel, the fact that it has accepted the support and protection of the community, demands the recognition of certain ethical principles of social obligation which are the essence of the Gospel it is out to proclaim.

We therefore offer the following as guiding principles to help the rural church meet its community responsibility. They are in keeping with the best social procedure and should be made a part of the constitution and by-laws of the rural church.

That there shall not be put into practice any theological idea or ecclesiastical policy that will in any way break down the community spirit, create division and consequently bring about a loss in social welfare and the more abundant life.

That in all the arrangements for the larger social welfare the church is obligated to find some place where it can make her contribution to the same.

That is, in the final analysis the church can justify its right to continue only as it shares equally in spirit, motive and practice in all the social objectives that have been accepted as the goal of community achievements.

### THE COUNTRY CHURCH AND ITS YOUTH

The outstanding opportunity that the country church has is marked by the fact that a larger percentage of its constituency is made up of children and youth of public school age and under. Recent studies of the census returns reveal the fact that there are between four and five million more children and youth



of public school age and under in the town and country as against the city. To evangelize this generation of youth and children now would be the greatest contribution that could be made both for city and country.

To do this the rural church must find a better way to relate itself with this part of its constituency. In too many instances the other agencies of the rural community have been able to capture this group. Most of these young people are outside the church. This is due to the fact that the church has not interested itself in that its program has been too narrow, with the result that they now are more interested in life outside the church.

Four H clubs, various junior organizations and secret orders, many forms of commercialized social activities are now entrenched in the life of rural children and youth. To talk of destroying these movements is futile, even if it were wise, which it would not be, for many of these agencies are doing a fine work and should be encouraged. The trouble is, that they are not complete in themselves, they are lacking in religious objective and must depend upon the church and its leaders to supply the same. It is unfortunate that so many churches have missed this opportunity to render a Christian service by using these avenues of approach to the life of rural youth. Much can still be done. As a rule the leaders of these rural youth groups are only too glad to get the cooperation of the church leaders. The church cannot expect to monopolize the time of the children and young people; it must be willing to ally itself with existing agencies, the school and the other social groups we have mentioned, and adapt its program to meet the need of this changed situation in the approach to the life of the young people.

Considering this question from the point of view of the program of Religious Education it becomes exceedingly important. The Rural Community presents the supreme opportunity for this service. Rural churches should band themselves together for the purpose of providing the most complete program of week-

day religious education and daily vacation schools. The rural community is not handicapped as the city community is with obstacles to this kind of program. As a rule both the school boards and the teachers of the public schools in the county are only too willing to cooperate in the program of moral and religious training to supplement what they are doing in general education.

Again the rural community offers a better opportunity for vacation work. The advantages of more natural surroundings, the object lessons of nature itself, the increasing leisure time of rural children all contribute to making possible a real vacation school program for the country church.

#### THE COUNTRY CHURCH AND A CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

To build a Christian civilization is one of the highest hopes of the human race. To do this makes the greatest demands upon all of us. It calls for hope, courage, faith and love. It will call for mutuality of living, for great sacrifice, for the negation of self and the consideration and enrichment of the lives of others. This is the message and the mission of the cross.

The qualities that have just been cited are by no means confined to rural life; one finds them in the great cities, but they appear like an oasis in the desert, for the modern city crushes out these qualities. The big cities in America and Europe are devouring the people, but that is not all, they have a tendency to sap the moral qualities without which no Christian civilization is possible.

It is in this regard that the country church stands out as an imperative institution. To continue to mold the life of our rural people along lines of constructive living, community building and neighborliness; to give to the boys and girls of our crossroad communities some real foundation in Christian living, is a contribution not only to the rural community but to the city as well. In fact, the city stands to reap the greatest reward from this service and therefore should be ready to pay the price and render whatever service it can. Most of these boys and girls

will be in the city tomorrow, and if our cities are to have even a nucleus of moral and spiritual idealism much will depend upon what is done with these boys and girls in our rural communities today.

It is here that the country church can render its finest contribution. It is in this regard that it occupies a unique place in the building of Christian civilization. No purely city civilization has as yet survived in history. It carries the seed of its own destruction. As Spengler has pointed out, our cities throughout history have always been the breeding place of vice, heresies, new cults and irreligion. The sidewalks of a city are stony soil in which to try to transplant religion.

### *The Spiritual Contribution of the Country*

The Bible is rich in the illustration of the problem we are here stating. From Genesis to Revelation it is the story of the fight between the high spiritual ideals of the country people against the domination of the pagan cities. Hebrew idealism was raised in the open country. It moved into town late in life and finally was taken into the city captivity where it had to fight a life and death struggle. The first city mentioned in the Bible was founded by a man who was under a curse. The Bible is a story of simple, rural, nomadic life. The great personalities were farmers and stockmen. Greatness of character was interpreted in the lives of these men and it gave to rural life a standing in the minds of the succeeding generations. In its earliest chapters we see in contrast these characteristics.

Abraham was the pioneer builder of rural community life. A great soul, a neighborly man, who gave Lot the first choice. We read that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. Finally he drifted into the city and became a terrible example of the disintegrating power of city life on the character of a retired farmer.

Abraham's chief concern was for the children who were to carry on the racial stock. The fertility of the soil, its relation to the vigor of the human stock, together with the moral qualities that are developed in the building of rural neighborships

are still the essential concern in the carrying on of a great Christian civilization.

Our American life is in peril at this very point. It is not a quantitative problem but a qualitative one; not how many people have you but what kind? We need to be concerned about the quality of our great populations. What are we thinking of when we hear the words, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York? What are the pictures that come immediately upon the screen of our minds as we hear the names of these great cities? Do we think of goodness, of beauty, of the church or Jesus Christ? We doubt it. Our first thoughts are likely to be of gang war, political graft, vice rings and corruption. Our cities do not have the spiritual potency to direct their lives. The rootless, propertyless masses of the big cities do not know enough or care enough to protect the principles of democratic government. They require a kind of dictatorship to keep them in order.

### *The Country and Good Government*

That is the reason why we face a problem of political democracy. Our big cities are a political peril. Democracy is breaking down in the city and dictatorship is taking the reins. We are now dependent upon the town and country population to maintain the quality of democratic government. The closely compact social life, such as is upon us in the great cities is making new demands upon our national life. It calls for mutuality of living, for cooperative service and good will; and this demand reaches its highest consummation in a democracy, for in a democracy we find a social order that is impossible without a religious motive. Democracy is a dream we can never realize without spiritual faith. Either religion must be made indispensable to the human race or we must abandon all hope of a democratic civilization. Our cities are now beginning to determine government and as a result we are trying to achieve a democracy without those spiritual ideals which alone can create those springs of human action, without which a democracy is impossible. For a true democracy demands abandonment

of self-interest and insists upon the spirit of sacrifice. The industrial system that has given us our urban trend is making it impossible for people to live their lives on the basis of a true democracy.

### *The Moral Contribution of Rural People*

The rural church has been our great moral force. This has been well illustrated throughout history by reason of the fact that our rural communities have always been the leaders of great moral issues. The most recent demonstration of this influence has been the elections in which the wet and dry question has been a leading issue. In every instance the first returns to come in, coming from the downtown sections of our big cities, indicated overwhelming victory for the wets. Later, as the up-state votes began to be reported the situation always changed, indicating a preponderant dry vote in the rural sections. Our rural communities for the most part have always been on the right side in great moral issues. This is due in large measure to the influence of the rural church. With all its weaknesses—and there are many—it has exerted a tremendous moral influence.

No finer moral program can be found than the one that is stated in the preamble to the constitution of the Grange. Founded over fifty years ago, a family institution, it has maintained great moral ideals. This has been particularly true of all our farm organizations. The farmers' press is also indicative of this same fact. Wholesome moral and religious teaching characterizes the weekly and monthly magazines that are designed for reading in the farm home. Otherwise they would not be received. The work of our church has borne fruit in our country communities, due in part to the fact that the agricultural community is a more natural environment in which religion has a chance. It is the place of the family and the home. We cannot hope to build a Christian civilization without the home. In many of our cities homes are becoming a thing of the past. Hotels, rooming houses, apartment houses, are the abodes of the city dweller, but these are not homes and explains in part

the moral trend of city life. Says Professor Wiggam, "Civic virtues die in apartment houses. Men will not be loyal to a smoke stack, they will not go out and shed their blood on the battlefield in defense of a boarding house."<sup>1</sup> And it is in terms of this great change from farms and homes to city streets and rooming houses that we must understand the moral trend of our civilization. In the meantime let us strengthen the work of the country church in the field where the family and the home still obtain. It is here that we can make the greatest contribution toward the building of strong Christian character that will go out to bless both country and city.

#### A NEW STRATEGY IN RURAL CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

In order to conceive some of the foregoing qualities and contributions of rural life and to make it possible for the rural church to continue its contributions to a Christian civilization it will be necessary to bring about a new strategy in the administration of the rural churches of America. The present program of denominational competition and rivalry is making it impossible for rural churches to continue. The fact that so many have survived is testimony sufficient that the Gospel is a moral miracle. We must remember, however, that in many instances their survival is due to the loyalty and sacrifice of a few people who have been willing to pay the bills to keep the denominational spirit alive. As these faithful folk pass away these churches face a life and death struggle as they try to continue as independent units of religious life.

Again, the denominational leaders must frankly face the new situation and be willing to meet one another and work out programs of comity and cooperation if many of the small rural communities are to have any church life whatever. They can no longer take refuge in old platitudes or excuses. Neither will it satisfy to emphasize the differences that exist between the denominations. The responsibility rests upon them to do some-

<sup>1</sup> *The New Decalogue of Science*. Garden City Publishing Company. Pg. 183.

thing positive and constructive. A way must be found to make these denominational adjustments more effective and with greater rapidity. There are difficulties, but these are well known and understood, and we now know that they are not insurmountable.

### *A Christian Attitude Necessary*

The first necessity is that of a Christian attitude toward this problem. To determine that no matter what the consequences may be in the loss or gain of churches to the denominations we are going to be Christian in this matter. Unless the leaders of the several large denominations are willing to consider their administrative task in this way, there is little hope for hundreds of rural churches. This is the most serious obstacle to rural church progress at the present moment. No program of church life, be it reorganization or anything else, can rise much higher than the spirit that lies behind it. If the attitude of the denominational leaders is suspicious and critical then all effort toward comity and cooperation in the local community is doomed to failure.

The laymen must be trusted in the working out of programs of church comity and cooperation. Greater freedom must be given to the lay people to discuss and plan for the getting together of the churches. The spiritual character of the laity will be tested severely at this point and no obstacles should be put across the pathway by outside administrators. Most of the failures in church comity come as a result of outside interference. The laymen are entitled to a clear field in which to face this problem. Nay, they are entitled to more. They have the right to expect the support and encouragement of their denominational leaders in the working out of these adjustments between local churches. Such support and the announcement that denominational leaders were standing behind the local churches in a movement toward unity and cooperation would bring hope and joy to hundreds of rural churches. It would start them out upon a campaign of brotherhood that would do

more toward a revival of real religion than any other single thing that has taken place during the past half century.

### *A Positive Attitude*

Another essential in this new strategy that we are advocating is that of taking a positive attitude. In most of the considerations of comity the situations have been approached on the basis of the things that must be eliminated rather than the things to be included. Every denomination has come into being as a result of some high value that it desired to conserve. These values must not be lost sight of in the movements toward comity and cooperation. For this reason it is essential that a wholesome positive attitude shall be brought to bear upon all such considerations; that a proper valuation be placed upon the specific contributions of the several denominations and a program provided where each man may continue to make his contribution. The verity and strength of all the churches in rural life are necessary if we are to rebuild a strong religious life for the future. Hundreds of rural communities are now dying because of the narrow and limited appeal made by the denominations. There are seldom enough people who will respond to this narrow and limited program. In the larger cities this is not so difficult. Usually there can be found enough people who will respond to the strictly denominational appeal; but this is not the case in the country. It will take all the churches working together to command enough people to build a strong church. To recognize the specific contribution of each denomination as the basis of cooperative endeavor will make possible the kind of community church that is so necessary to rural life.

### *In Conclusion*

In presenting this appeal for a new strategy we are not without hope. A new vision of possibilities is now on the horizon for the rural church. Certain vast opportunities and great perils have been made clearly plain in recent experiences. They constitute a new challenge to the administrative leadership of the



church. They provide a new framework for the social economic, educational, moral and religious life of rural America. We are discovering that the self-centered religious institutions and usages of yesterday are neither permanent nor unchangeable. We are discovering that what the denominations thought was an impossible barrier to unity yesterday is today but a curtain that we are able to pull aside. To overcome these obstacles, however, will require a more powerful and determined effort than that which sustains the present order. This responsibility now rests with denominational administrators. If the rural church is again to occupy a place of power in the religious life of the nation, if it is to recover the spiritual potency that will enable it to lift mankind in the future as it has in the past, if it is to continue as the stream of life, to replenish and purify the congested cities of the land, then it will require a new strategy on the part of denominational leaders to meet the situation. Independent action must give way to cooperative endeavor. Denominational self-interest must clear the way for kingdom welfare. We do not despair. Much of what has been suggested is already taking form. We can only plead for a quickening of the pace in order that the rural church may be conserved to carry on its mission in the making of a better Christian civilization.

## XX

### THE CHURCH IN THE CITY

IRA G. McCORMACK

THE civilizations of the past found their consummation and disintegration in the city. Tribute was laid on every part of the Mediterranean world that its best might enhance the beauty and glory of Rome. The Empire labored that its finest culture might reside in the city on the Tiber. But, having made the city, the city destroyed its creator. Long before the Provinces were touched by corruption, Rome was corrupt. In the city flowered those forces which debauched the people and destroyed the civilization of the Empire. So with Babylon, Nineveh, Athens, Carthage, and all the other great civilizations of history.

We find this history disturbing. Dr. John Haynes Holmes links our present with this past. He says: "For better or worse, for life or death, Russia is Moscow, Germany is Berlin, England is London, and America is New York."<sup>1</sup> We believe that the United States is too big to center its destiny in any one city, yet, in a more complete way than the past has ever known, ours is an urban civilization. Fifty-six per cent of our people are city dwellers, and a vastly larger percentage than the above lies under the city's influence. If the moral debacle of Rome, of Babylon, ended the reign of these great empires, what possibilities must we face today! If our civilization is to be saved, it must be saved in the cities. The future of Christian civilization lies with the church in the city.

The first statesmanship of Christianity adequately estimated the meaning and influence of the city. Jesus, leaving Nazareth,

<sup>1</sup> Oxnam, *Varieties of Present Day Preaching*. Abingdon. Pg. 392.

established his residence in Capernaum. He never ceased to contend for Jerusalem. To win Galilee and lose Jerusalem was not enough. And it was an unwon Jerusalem that destroyed Him. Paul itinerated from one great urban center to another. The final stroke of his strategy is the statement, "and so we came to Rome."<sup>2</sup> His gospel captured many, eventually a Cæsar, but it never completely captured the city. Disturbing as this thought may be, we are confident that history need not repeat itself here. The future of our American civilization depends on the Church in the city.

Since the large city growth of our country has been mainly in the last forty or fifty years, it is not difficult to make a fairly complete summary of the Church's relation to this growth. In doing this, we shall make large use of Dr. Paul Douglas's splendid book.<sup>3</sup> He discloses that there is a consistent trend of behavior running through from type to type and including the vast majority of city churches. This is believed to disclose a process of change and evolution, the result of which should be a progressive adaptation of the church to the city. The larger denominations have recognized this change of interest, and have placed new emphasis upon the church in the city. One of the main expressions of this emphasis is in the work of their Home Mission Boards. Home Missions in its earlier history was largely a matter of church extension, following closely the receding frontier. The Home Mission Boards faithfully performed this task, and their representatives were always only a short distance behind the explorer, the soldier and the settler.

One of the first to evaluate a change of direction in its work was the Board of Home Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While not forgetting its obligation to the frontier sections, the still pressing demands of new church edifices, or the place of the church in rural fields, it did catch the challenge of the modern city and organized the "Department of City Work." Most of the success of this department was due to the able and daring leadership of the late Dr. Melvin P. Burns, its director.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 28:14.    <sup>3</sup> *One Thousand City Churches*. Chap. IV. Pg. 76-91.

A very comprehensive program was developed. This department became outstanding in its exploration of the city field of Christian service, in devising methods suited to the needs of city churches, and in organizing a new battle front to stop the continuing retreat of the churches in our larger centers. Once a year it called together the church leaders of the cities. This annual meeting of the "Council of Cities" brought together the best minds, the best leadership, the best methods of the city church. And its published reports were so esteemed that they found their places in many libraries and were used as texts in many schools. This effort of one Mission Board was emulated by practically all the Home Mission Boards of the larger denominations. This fact has made possible an increasingly larger coöperation and gives hope of a stronger comity in dealing with the city problem.

According to Dr. Douglas, the church, in expanding to meet the new and varied demands of the spiritual need and emerging culture of our country, developed four main lines of service, in addition to public worship:

- a. The Sunday School.
- b. The Ladies Aid Society.
- c. The Women's Missionary Societies.
- d. The Young People's Organizations.

With small qualification, the city church has made no greater use of these four agencies than the rural or town church. And since these four main lines of work came into being, with the possible exception of the Brotherhood and organized Bible class in the field of men's work, and the emergence of certain types of social service activities, very little has been added as general characteristics of the work of the Church in America. So, when a family moves from Sauk Center to Minneapolis, it finds, in the main, a church organized exactly as the rural church back home. Its activities may not be so simple, but the only real difference is an added complexity due to increasing size.

According to Dr. Douglas's survey, twenty-five per cent or

more of city churches are no larger, no more completely organized, than many average rural churches. This group seems unaware of the distinctively urban character of their environment, and registers no response to it. Even those churches which are listed as among the more effective have generally yielded to the pressure of the trends of population. For, until rather recently, a city church was ever inclined to follow its old constituency, or to seek a new environment more congenial to its ministry. The Broadway Tabernacle, in New York, made two such moves before reaching its present location, a location which is now exceedingly difficult. That it stays on in the heart of the theatrical district of our greatest city, is a fine testimonial to the faith and courage of Dr. Charles E. Jefferson and his successor. However, we must recognize that certain shifts of population in a large city mean a complete change in the ministry and work of the average Protestant church. To leave such changing sections is to lose the city. To stay is to change the program almost completely.

In view of these facts, we need churches deeply conscious of the total need of the city. This total need will call for a more direct message from the pulpit, a program built to meet a city's varied needs, and a re-organization within and among the Protestant denominations. To answer such a call we must consider the city as a whole. For some years I have been making a study of "Type Churches." So far as these churches relate to city developments we witness a wide variety of adaptation. Yet, even the adaptation of a church to a down-town, or residential, or slum district, while helpful, does not in any large way meet the total need of the city. But I feel sure it does reveal certain essential facts involved in establishing the church in dominant leadership in the city today.

The first great need is comity lifted to an extreme of privilege and power. We would begin by dividing the city into service areas according to environmental conditions. Roughly we headline these areas as down-town, residential, and suburban. Between down-town and residential we would consider definite

fields such as rooming house, tenement, slum, etc. In each of these areas and fields we would seek the establishment of enough churches really to serve and inspire the people therein. This might mean new churches, but it probably would mean consolidation and elimination. Dr. Joseph A. Vance, writing of the down-town church, says: "Some of the great churches of the big city should retain their down-town locations, but it is a foolish competition and an unwise use of valuable property for all of them to remain there. In every great American city there should be at least one great down-town church whose pulpit can be to that city what the City Temple is to London; but it is foolish to try to make, for example, every one of our six great down-town Woodward Avenue Churches of today into a City Temple. One of them will do, and the big financial assets of the rest should be made to serve the spiritual needs of the city of Detroit in some other way and location." <sup>4</sup>

In many suburban sections comity has led to the building of one church, often called the "Community Church." Having served as Pastor of the Washington Park Community Church in Denver I am convinced of the value, the usefulness and the potential power of such a church in the city's life. This church, located in a new and well-defined residential development, was allowed, by consent of the larger denominations, to pre-empt the field. It is definitely related to the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. From this Conference it receives its ministerial leadership, and through the Conference it finds its world field of missionary service. But its government is congregational, its creed the New Testament teaching of Jesus, and its membership comes from fourteen denominations. The church structure was planned and built to house community organizations and activities, and to operate a full seven-day week program of religious services. In size, in program, in service to its community, it stands in unique prestige as compared to other churches in newer sections of Denver,

<sup>4</sup> "The Down-town Church," in *The North American Home Missions Congress Data Book*, Vol. I. Pg. 8, 9.

where the field is divided among several small denominational church units.

We appreciate the difficulties of securing this ideal. But, while the total task is still only distantly possible, much is immediately practicable. Let denominational leaders begin at once to work for fewer and better churches. For through these better organizations, the usual avenues of service, which, according to Dr. Douglas, have been in use for years past, and which have been brought to the city with little adaptation, can be rebuilt to meet the city's need.

We would like to add one more type of service which we believe is distinct and very much needed today. Dr. Fosdick called it confessional conferences; we would prefer to name it a "Spiritual Clinic." A place where the distracted, confused souls of modernity can seek help, comfort and relief. It requires no more training on the part of the Minister than that which should be required for effective pastoral service. The door of this clinic opens on a wide field of usefulness. Once made known and understood, it will become an effective arm of the church's service and a haven of refuge for the city's lost souls.

America is just awakening to the realization that we are in the midst of a great revolution. Frederick Lane Allen, in *Only Yesterday*,<sup>6</sup> tells us that since the great war the United States has undergone a revolution in manners and morals. We cannot escape the belief that it goes much farther than he has indicated. Our day has been the recipient of new knowledge, new power, new wealth, new freedom,—all of which has made such a tremendous change in our civilization that it constitutes a revolution of major dimensions. These changes affect the entire life of our nation, but they surely find their climax in our cities. Every church must understand these terrific changes as expressed in the life conditions of our country, and especially is this true of the church in the city. When we raise the question, Can we record an advance in morals, in righteousness, in character, equal to the advance we have made in knowledge, in power,

<sup>6</sup> Pg. 94.

and in wealth, the answer is plainly in the negative. The church has yet to merit the full approval of God in this great hour of human history.

We cannot escape the modern city. The church will either overthrow the menacing and destructive forces of the city or the city will overthrow the church. In this chapter we have stated the dangers, we have pointed some ways of approach to the problem. The final answer is in terms of the far-off ideal. Meanwhile we of the city church must keep fighting, sector by sector, for we are engaged in a war, not a battle. Keeping in mind that "city coming down out of heaven from God,"<sup>6</sup> let us carry on!

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 21:2.



## XXI

### THE MOVEMENT TOWARD UNITY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

CHARLES ARTHUR HAWLEY

THE year 1930, which marked the nineteen hundredth anniversary of Pentecost, saw an interesting phenomenon in the entire Christian Church: an earnest desire for unity. True, there have always been efforts to create a united Christendom, but there has never been any effort comparable to the urgent demand of the present time. This demand is considered by many as a moral necessity, by others as an economic one. All, however, recognize that denominational, sectarian Christianity is a survival of a past age of controversy which has today lost all meaning. This conviction was emphasized throughout the Church as a result of the World War. A common project demanded a united church. The last fifteen years, as a result, have seen the rise of such movements as the Community Church, the Inter-Church World Movement, and negotiations for organic union of various denominational agencies.

The modern expression of the need for unity oftentimes is unintelligent, at other times it comes from despair, but again it represents a genuine desire to fulfill what seems to be the hope of the Founder of the Church. Although the movement toward unity has been characteristic of the Christian Church everywhere, perhaps more has been said about it, and less actually accomplished, in America than anywhere else. Canada, Scotland, China, India, and Korea have faced the problem with greater daring than have we.

We have been criticized because of our hesitancy, our ecclesi-

astical conservatism. In a recent lecture, on Christian Unity, the Bishop of Gloucester had this to say: "It is, I think, a characteristic at the present day of American Christianity that it ignores the intellectual and historical side."<sup>1</sup> It seems to the present writer that this diagnosis is correct. Much of our discussion about federation and unity comes to nothing because there is no adequate historical perspective. There is often a vague feeling that denominations are meaningless survivals, but there is no adequate appreciation of the once vital experience which brought them into being. There is also a lack of understanding of the real significance of the Church. Before there can be a united Church there must be an intelligent appreciation of a certain need, and how best to meet it.

It is the purpose of this chapter briefly to review the development of the Church; raise a few pertinent questions; try to answer them, and from these answers attempt to point out what seems to be the present trend toward unity in American Christianity.

## I

In the first place, when did the Church begin? It is obvious to all that the Church is more than any one of its branches. Some scholars hold that the Church really began with the prophet Isaiah, who, when his counsel had been spurned by the king, retired from active life in order to found a society trusting only in God and His word. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord. . . ." <sup>2</sup> It may be that this divine society gave the impetus to that which, during the exile, developed into the synagog.

It was the exile which made such a society necessary. Ezekiel proved to be the man raised up for the time. He outlined a new dwelling for JHWH, their God, whom the people believed had fled from the fallen city. The new theocracy restored the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in A. C. Headlam, *Christian Unity*. Macmillan, London, 1930. Pg. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 8:16f.

God of the people; universalized him, and to perpetuate his worship and the unity of the people, formed the *kahal* or congregation. The people no longer regarded themselves as a political nation, but as a congregation. The Septuagint translated the Hebrew term *synagog*, that is, a coming together. Thus as a *synagog* the people of Israel survived the exile.

The Septuagint also uses another word, *ecclesia*, to translate congregation. This latter word appears in the New Testament as the *Church*. The sources relative to Christianity are very clear on this point. The earliest Christians worshipped in the *synagog* and regarded themselves members of it. They seem to have had no intention of leaving it. The passages in Matthew 16:17-19 and 18:15-20 use *ecclesia*, but in all other instances Jesus used the term kingdom of God as an equivalent for *kahal*, rather than *ecclesia*. As soon, however, as we turn from the Gospels to the Pauline writings we come constantly upon the word *ecclesia* and this is the word which has passed into all modern languages.

A much more difficult problem, however, appears in the attempt to discover the way in which the new Christian organization achieved self-consciousness. We should expect the twelve pupils who composed Jesus' seminar (for Jesus taught as did the prophets before him) to perpetuate his work. The early history of the new movement, however, tells us surprisingly little about these men. Aside from the *Acts of the Apostles*, which is devoted mainly to Paul, we have detailed information only about three: Peter, James, and John. The career of James, the son of Zebedee, was cut short by the persecution of Herod Agrippa I, and since Herod himself died in A.D. 44, James cannot have survived more than a dozen years after the Crucifixion. So aside from later and legendary material, we must concern ourselves with two of Jesus' pupils, Peter and John.

Paul tells us that in his second visit to Jerusalem,<sup>\*</sup> about thirteen years after his conversion, i.e., about the year 48, he found only these two. He tells us also that James, the brother

<sup>\*</sup> Galatians 2:9.

of Jesus, had, in the meantime, become the head of the Jerusalem Church. Now James was not one of the original twelve and in the Gospel records is not even sympathetic with Jesus' work. It is not easy to see what brought about James' sudden conversion unless it was somehow connected with the Resurrection. It is easy, however, to see how he so quickly became the head of the Jerusalem congregation.

The uniqueness of the party that associated themselves with Jesus lay in the fact that they had already identified him with the national Messiah foretold by the prophets. It must not be forgotten that the new name *Christian* had not yet come into existence. James, after his acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, would naturally be chosen as head of the party, since he was the next oldest brother. James evidently met his death, if we accept the narrative as told by Eusebius and Josephus, in the year 62. In 70, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. This put an end to the control of the Messianic family, otherwise Jerusalem might have continued to be the center of the new movement. Another point of interest: James represented the Judaistic party and, had he lived, it seems likely that the Messianic party would have developed very differently.

Concerning John we have two traditions. Papias tells us that he was killed by the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. Another tradition, however, has John live in Ephesus, write the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles. Some also hold that he wrote the Apocalypse, and that he died at an advanced age in his adopted city around the year 100.

Our information about the last days of Peter is also meager. *Acts* tells us that he inaugurated the movement to admit Gentiles to the Church on confession of their faith, apart from the Jewish law. He is sentenced to death by Herod Agrippa, but escapes and takes a leading part in the Council at Jerusalem. This is the last the Biblical sources say of him. A later tradition has him go to Rome where he meets martyrdom, but this tradition is much disputed.

Our sources tell us that the churches began their real develop-

ment under the Apostle Paul, the missionary to the Gentiles. He was not, however, the founder of the great churches, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. Each of these churches was quite independent and the only bond of union was their rigid adherence to the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. The Christian Church was thus the new synagogue or the *ecclesia* of the Messiah. By the year 70, James of Jerusalem, Paul, and all the pupils of Jesus, with the possible exception of John, had died. The independent groups throughout the Roman Empire were thus left orphaned. It was about thirty years later in the Gentile *ecclesia* at Ephesus that the first desire for union is expressed.

The conscious desire for unity in the Christian churches clearly appears toward the close of the first century A.D. It has ever since remained an ideal incentive for action, a goal for those most socially minded, a stumbling block for reformers, and a dogma for those who have arrogated to themselves a special superiority. It has never been fully realized, because unity and tyranny are so closely related. To understand this great ideal, this deeply interesting problem, we must go back to the beginnings, for unless we know the origin of a thing, we cannot successfully deal with it. Our task, therefore, must be largely historical.

## II

We have seen that the sources do not justify the belief that the Apostle Paul is the founder of the Christian Church. Unfortunately, we know but little about the origin of the Church in Egypt. By tradition, Mark, after his dispute with Paul, founded the Church in Alexandria. The history of this church proved to be of great importance and had its prime mover showed the same zeal for writing that the evangelist in the West employed, our whole view of Christian development might be different.

It is important to keep in mind that the Gospel which emphasizes the desire for unity the most ardently, the Fourth Gospel, popularly known as the Gospel of John, opens with a

Hellenistic philosophy, that of the Logos. This Logos philosophy flourished especially at Alexandria. Ephesus was the other city famous for the teaching of the immanence of God in the world through the connecting Logos.

The origin of Christianity in Ephesus is likewise obscure, though by no means so obscure as that of Alexandria. The development in Ephesus is described by our sources, viz., the later Pauline Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Johanne writings. The most important of these documents, the Fourth Gospel, gives the Ephesian interpretation of Jesus. We see him as the head of a church and hear him plead that in his Church there may be unity. The seventeenth chapter of this Gospel puts in an unforgettable way the prayer for a union as perfect as was the spiritual life of Jesus with his Father God.

This Gospel is dated roughly around the year A.D. 100. By this time Paul had been dead about forty years. The synoptic gospels had, together with the Pauline Epistles, become the basis for a New Testament collection of authoritative books with which to show the separate character of the new movement. The Church had weathered a Jewish and a Roman persecution. It now began to look at itself. It not only became conscious of discord, but also faced the actual possibility of destruction unless it could present a united effort to a hostile world. It saw also another need for unity. Up to this time its history had been the history of the important cities in which it had rooted itself. Now things were changing and there must be some unity of purpose if the Founder's last commands were to be realized. Jerusalem had by now lost its importance as to a certain extent had Cæsarea, Antioch, Ephesus, and Rome began to gain. Each center, like Corinth and the others, had a clearly marked character, and each had emphasized a pioneer founder. But now the pioneers were dead and the Church must stand on its own merits and must conquer the world. Ephesus saw clearly this necessity for a united church. More than that, the Ephesian church believed such a union was the theme of the Lord's last prayer.

The only bond of union at this time was the Messiahship of Jesus. This in the Greek gives us the term "Christ." This was the only thing Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, Corinth, and Alexandria had in common. But this was enough, and from it came a new term found neither in the Septuagint nor in the New Testament canon, but which soon appeared in the first common statement of belief. The word is *catholicos*, which means universal; the creed is the germ of the one we popularly call the Apostles'.

The word *catholic* as applied to a united church of the Messiah first appears in a letter which Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the Church in Smyrna about the year 115. He says:

"Wherever the episcopos shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus may be, there is the catholic church. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

Later on, Ignatius explains further: "That he might set up an ensign unto all ages, through his resurrection for his saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, *on one body of his Church*." It is significant that both the adjectives *Christian* and *catholic* were first applied to the new Church at Antioch. The Muratorian Fragment (c. 200) issuing from Rome used the word "catholic" to mean "one church spread throughout the whole world." Irenæus of Lyons in Gaul, writing about the same time, also speaks of the Catholic Church as possessing one and the same faith throughout the whole world.

The Christian Church by this time had forced upon it the necessity for united strength, not only by Jewish and Roman persecution, but also by a more difficult problem within its own fold, viz., Gnosticism. If, therefore, it was to survive, it must present not only an historic unity in the Messiah and a geographical unity, but also a unity of teaching. This is the situation that gave rise to the summary of teaching known as the Apostles' Creed. It is pleasant to recall that a primitive unity has remained to this day in the fact that nearly all branches of

<sup>4</sup> 8:2.

the church can and do unite in this simple statement. It must be noted also that each article of this statement comes directly from the New Testament. Alas, if the Church had held strictly to this primitive statement there might have been today a united church. To bring the Church back to this position has been the purpose of each reformation. Only this position can, in the true sense, be called catholic.

The next point which we must consider is the perplexing one of order or polity. Let it be quite clear that there have developed *three* forms of church polity: The Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Independent. All varieties of Christian churches come into one of these polities. It has been the custom until very recently for each of the polities to go back to the New Testament to find arguments to prove that it was the original apostolic order. But present-day scholarship is proving the futility of such a procedure. It is recognized now by the most competent scholarship that the Apostles laid down no system of church order for the church in Jerusalem or in any other city. In some instances, one order seems to flourish, in another, another. There was no uniformity. For this reason, it has been so easy for each polity to justify itself by piecing together various passages. Uniformity came in time, but not as a result of any original type given by Jesus or by his immediate pupils.

It is necessary to pause here to note the significance of the word *episcopos*, which means literally *overseer*, and which has passed into the language of the Church as *bishop*. Just what was the significance of this word in the early churches? As far as the New Testament sources go, it seems to be the equivalent of the word *presbyter*, which also means *overseer* and which has passed into the language of the Church as *presbyter*. This is the expressed opinion of many of the Church fathers—notably Jerome. As time went on, however, and the various independent churches found it necessary to act as a united body, it became necessary to have one *overseer* for a number of churches. The extreme revolt against the episcopal order in the seventeenth century, while justified as far as biblical sources are con-



cerned, as a practical matter was a mistake. There are few more incompetent forms of church government than extreme independency. A wise bishop is almost a necessity for the most efficient church government. But this does not harmonize with our extreme democratic ideas.

So far our study has revealed to us two things: (1) No one form of polity characterized the primitive Apostolic Church. In fact, the sources clearly show that the various cities had most democratic organizations. For example, the author of the First Epistle of Peter insists that no presbyter shall lord it over another; that all must be examples of humility in mutual co-operation. He says that he himself is a presbyter.<sup>8</sup> The sources, however, clearly show that a later development made it necessary or advisable to make one presbyter a sort of president over the others, a presiding bishop would perhaps be a better term.<sup>9</sup> But alas, human nature has, with rare exceptions, never been able to remain sober when offered great authority—as a result the democracy of the early Church gradually gave way to an absolute episcopacy. (2) The term "catholic" came into use to describe the universal allegiance to the belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. This term at first had no relation to the later dogmas of rigid orthodoxy. This connotation in fact came as a direct result of the ecumenical councils, the first of which was held at Nicæa in 325. Orthodox Catholicism was thus an outgrowth of the movement toward unity in the first three hundred years of the life of the Christian Church.

### III

To the ecumenical councils we must now turn. There were seven of them, as follows:

The first council, as has already been said, was held at Nicæa in 325. This council, like all the others, was called in the in-

<sup>8</sup> Cf. I Peter, 5:1.

<sup>9</sup> Since the remarkable concessions of Bishop Lightfoot, the Anglican Church has modified its attitude in this matter. Many Episcopalians today have demonstrated the most courageous leadership in the cause of unity, notably the late Bishop Brent.

terest of unity. In the Eastern Church, where there was a much greater tendency to speculation than in the West, there had developed certain philosophical discussions regarding the unity of substance and co-eternity of the Father and the Son. This was to be expected. The Fourth Gospel, when compared with the Synoptic Gospels, shows a certain tendency in this direction. As time went on, this tendency developed into ideas so divergent that the unity of the Church was seriously threatened. The matter finally came to a head in a local quarrel in Alexandria between Bishop Alexander and Arius, a presbyter, in the same city. Arius, as all the world now knows, taught that Jesus was not co-eternal with God, the Father, but was merely the first-born of creatures and so had a beginning in time. There now appeared on the scene a man whose influence was destined to mould the future of the Church. This man was Athanasius. He held that Jesus was both entirely God and entirely man.

We must bear in mind, at all times, that we cannot separate religion from history. At this point Constantine comes into the scene. He had in 314 defeated Licinius and had, thereby, become emperor of both East and West. The young emperor desired above all else to preserve harmony in his vast empire. He pled with both sides for peace, but when he saw the situation becoming more involved, he summoned the bishops of both East and West to meet at Nicæa.

The council sat for a little more than two months. When adjournment came, certain important items had been agreed upon in the interest of unity. It was agreed to celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the full moon after the spring equinox. This old question had threatened the unity of the Church from a very early period. Jewish Christians had naturally observed this movable feast according to their own customs. They thought of it as the Paschal sacrifice and paid no attention to the day of the week. The Gentile Christians, on the other hand, not feeling any emotional response to the Jewish tradition, held chiefly to the Sunday observance in commemoration of the

Resurrection as having taken place on that day. But the more important question in the interest of unity was regarding the relation of Jesus to the Father—God. It was finally agreed that Jesus was the same substance as God.

Of course, not all Christendom was represented at Nicæa. For example, the Novatians in Rome had formed separate societies after the Decian persecution. Likewise the Donatists in Carthage had held aloof, building their own organizations. But these groups might be considered of little significance. The important thing is, that the Arians from now on, though officially a part of the Church, held to their own opinions. By staying in the Church they set the example for the union that is to be—a unity which recognizes difference of opinion.

The second ecumenical council was called in 381 by the Emperor Theodosius I. This council again condemned Arianism along with some other heresies (private right to choose what to believe). The Creed was elaborated and the unity of the Church preserved. The third council met at Ephesus in 431, primarily to confute Pelagius and Nestorius. Each side went away unconvinced, and the Nestorians began to found their own churches, thus lessening the cause of unity. The fourth council met at Chalcedon in 451 at the insistence of the Alexandrian Patriarchate which seems to have been excessively quarrelsome. Nothing was accomplished in the cause of unity.

The fifth council, which met at Constantinople in 553, continued the condemnation of the Nestorians who continued to flourish. The breach begins to widen. The sixth council, which convened at Constantinople in 681, continued to discuss metaphysical questions without adding to the unity of the Church. In the seventh council, which met at Nicæa in 787, the East and West came into conflict over the use of pictures, images, etc., as an aid to worship. By this time the Jews and Mohammedans had come to the point where they considered the Christian veneration of such things as nothing short of breaking the commands of Moses and as idolatry. The Eastern Church opposed the images, etc., but the Western Church upheld their

use and won the decision. This meant a real loss as far as unity was concerned.

These councils are held by various churches to be the only basis for union. The Swedish Lutheran, the Old Catholic, the Anglo-Catholic, the Greek Orthodox Catholic, and the Roman Catholic are the chief protagonists of this theory of union. The only difficulty, however, lies in the fact that these seven councils never did represent a truly undivided church. They were called for reasons demanded by the time; they served the purpose well. In this they prepare the way for a general council of all Protestantism.

The interests of the East and West under the leadership of the Bishop of Rome constantly clashed. The Roman power grew under the motto "no Papacy, no Church." Corruption, however, kept suspicion alive as to the security of a church built on such a foundation. When things began to look dark the "Isidorian Decretals" and later the "Donation of Constantine" were brought forward to justify this power in the minds of the people. The East, however, grew ever more restive till the year 1054, when the complete separation came. This division was followed by a more serious schism in the Western Church itself. This break began with the establishing of Avignon instead of Rome as the seat of power and is popularly known as the Babylonian captivity. This led to the real schism, which lasted from 1378 to 1417, when Avignon fought Rome and Rome fought Avignon. This split in the Church hastened the great Reformation.

While these things were going on in the Western Church, John Wyclif had become the center of England's protest, and in Bohemia the protest had crystallized around John Hus. In Italy, meanwhile, Dante had pled for peace and harmony, and Marsilius of Padua,<sup>7</sup> had produced his immortal *Defensor Pacis*.

<sup>7</sup> Marsilius held that the unity of the Church is dependent on one creed which must be derived exclusively from the Bible. This, in turn, would demand interpretation, but no interpretation can be used for creedal purposes unless approved by a general council of the Church.

Marsilius was really a forerunner of the doctrine of "making the world safe for democracy." When it was utterly unsafe for him to hold such opinions, he urged that the real sovereignty lies only in the people—this both religiously and politically. He further proceeded to show that the ultimate source of religious authority lies in the New Testament which it is the duty of the Church to teach. He agreed with Jerome and modern scholars in identifying presbyters and bishops, but he argued that as a practical matter an episcopacy is the more efficient. He sought unity in the belief that a general council should define Christian teaching. Things went on this way for almost two hundred years; then under the clash between Johann Tetzel and Martin Luther, the revolt spread till all northern Europe had declared itself independent, as had the Eastern Church nearly five hundred years before.

There now arose the Lutheran or Protestant movement and the Reformed or Presbyterian movement. The former centered around Luther and his followers in Germany, the latter first around Zwingli and later around Calvin in Switzerland. In 1529 a conference was called at Marburg seeking to unite these two bodies. Luther held steadfastly to a literal interpretation of the phrase "this is my body," as regards the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Zwingli, on the other hand, maintained that a symbolic interpretation was the correct one. To this day the two churches have remained apart, called respectively Lutheran and Presbyterian, or Reformed. The Church of England kept its original polity, merely transferring its power from the Bishop of Rome to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

During all this time, however, the desire for a united church never ceased. In 1538 negotiations began looking toward a union of the Lutheran and Anglican bodies. National Characteristics prevented the union. Another attempt made from 1547 to 1553 to unite the Anglican and Presbyterian (Reformed) Churches likewise failed. No one today would for a moment doubt that, if the leaders could have looked down the

centuries and have seen the consequences, union would have been consummated. The desire for unity is emphatically brought out in Calvin's letter to Cranmer:

" . . . O that it were possible that the men of learning and authority from the principal churches might be brought together in some designated place, and, after diligently discussing the various articles of faith, might by a unanimous decision hand down to posterity the positive teaching of Scripture. Among the greatest evils of our age, this fact must also be mentioned, that our churches are so divided one from the other, that human society scarcely flourishes among us, much less that sacred fellowship of the members of Christ, which all profess by word of mouth, but which few cultivate in sincerity. . . . Thus it happens, that the members being dissipated, the body of the Church lies wounded. As far as I am concerned, if I might seem to be of use, I would not object to crossing ten seas, if it were necessary, for this purpose. If it were merely a question of helping England, that alone would be for me reason enough. But now that the object is to seek such an agreement of learned men, strictly according to Scripture, by which the churches now so widely separated might agree among themselves, I do not think that I ought to begrudge any labor or trouble. . . . " \*

Calvin was the first to try to reconcile Luther and Zwingli. He believed schism to be a sin, and that in the Holy Catholic Church was to be found the word and way of life. The influence of Calvin as the author of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* cannot be measured. He went back to the Apostle Paul and to Augustine as his authorities and carried their promises to their logical conclusions. His system, though stamped out in his native France, flourished in Switzerland, Holland, Great Britain, and passed over with the early New Englanders to America, where it forms the basis of our institutions. In all this we should not forget that Calvin's great ideal was a united church.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile in England, Presbyterianism had control

\* Written at Geneva in April, 1552. Joannis Calvini *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, Ed. Reuss. Brunsvigae, 1875. Col. 313f.

<sup>9</sup> It looks as though the desire of Cranmer and Calvin may in the not distant future be realized. The newspapers have in the past year carried several accounts of the attempt of Presbyterians and Episcopalians to unite. If the two bodies were true to the hope of their highest ideals, union could be consummated.

from 1643 to 1649. The Presbyterian group, however, refused to comply when Charles' death was decided upon, and declared for a treaty with Charles. The Independent group headed by Cromwell had the army and from the execution of Charles was in control in order that the Episcopalian or Presbyterian groups might not foster reaction. This state of affairs continued until the Restoration. The Scotch, however, revolted against the Prayer Book and the incompetence of the bishops and declared themselves Presbyterian forever.

The seventeenth century, nevertheless, was characterized by a desire for union. Among those who worked and wrote most zealously was the famous Richard Baxter. In 1660 he published his famous "*Catholic Unity: on the only way to bring us all to be of one religion.*" This he followed with his *Cure of Church Divisions* and his *Church Concord*. If some public spirited man wants to help a good cause, let him republish these books.

In the meantime there had grown up the Independent polity. This came as a protest against the Presbyterian order which had arrogated to itself too much power. To the Independents, Thomas Edwards, a man utterly unlike Baxter, paid his respects in his *Gangraena* (1646) and in his *Against Toleration*, which he published the next year. These were violent attacks against the "Brownists" and the rest. It is pleasant to remember the genial manner in which good old Thomas Fuller paid his respects to Edwards; nor can we forget the less genial manner in which John Milton did the same thing. There have always been men of Edwards' type as well as those of Baxter's.

John Davenant (1572-1641), Joseph Hall (1574-1656), Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), George Calixus (1586-1656), and John Dury (1596-1680) all worked, prayed, and wrote in defense of a united church. In fact, this problem occupied the best minds of the century. William Drummond, the poet of Hawthornden (1585-1649), on the occasion of Charles I submitting to the demands of the Scotch Presbyterians (1638), wrote one of the most important of his prose treatises, "*Irene: A Remonstrance for Concord, Amity and Love amongst his*

Majesty's subjects." John Donne, the poet-dean of Saint Paul's, while defending the Reformation as necessary, refused to treat it as anything but a cleansing of the historic church which he desired to unify, believing that God could not trust any one division with too much power. The entire list of those who worked for unity is too long to give in any detail, but investigation into the lives of the Christian leaders of this period shows one dominant desire and that is to fulfill the prayer of the Founder of the Church as recorded in the Fourth Gospel, "*that they all may be one.*"<sup>10</sup>

#### IV

America inherited all of the religious quarrels of Europe. The early colonists were the more adventurous radicals. These also were mostly Puritans, and when they had once established their own idea of what a church ought to be, they opposed any other polity or belief. For example, the Quakers, the Baptists and other non-conforming Puritans were violently rejected and often physically ejected by the colonists. Eventually, however, the various polities established themselves, and the Independents and Presbyterians, together with a certain number of Episcopalians, dominated definite sections of the original thirteen states.

Certain unforeseen events, however, were destined to bring about on the American continent a united church. These were (1) separation of church and state, (2) the decline of the church college and the rise of the state universities, (3) the interdenominational character of theological seminaries, (4) the development of the Sunday school, (5) the shifting of the point of view in religion from dogma to history, from historic confessions to the spiritual experience of religious reformers and the result of missions.

1. The first of these points, the separation of church and state, was destined to have a far-reaching influence. It all began when in 1631 a Baptist scholar by the name of Roger Williams

<sup>10</sup> John 17:21.



came from Cambridge University to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was the most thoroughgoing of all the Puritans. Having suffered under Archbishop Laud, he had arrived at the conclusion that no one under any circumstances should be molested because of his religious belief. He reasoned a bit further and came to a conclusion startling for the seventeenth century: no man should be compelled to maintain a form of worship without his consent. Of course, this meant the complete separation of church and state, and this bold Puritan had the temerity to say so. On this point, Williams proved to be not only a radical of radicals, but the great American prophet.

It is obvious that the Massachusetts colonists could not endure such teaching, so in 1635 they gave Williams his choice: deportation to England and Archbishop Laud or exile among the savage redskins. Being a brave man, he wisely chose the Indians. The immediate result of all this was the founding of Providence; the remote result was the cherished American principle of separation of church and state.

Complete religious freedom was also guaranteed by William Penn, who, while a student at Oxford, experienced a thorough religious conversion. After joining the group of despised persons, called derisively Quakers, he came to America to proclaim religious toleration, peace and good-will to all, and eventually to hasten the cause of Christian unity.

2. The earliest colonists founded colleges to educate the clergy for their churches. Those of New England, however, had a very different idea in mind from those of Virginia. But as separation of church and state became a fact, the apostle of the state university appeared in the person of Thomas Jefferson. The year 1825 is of cardinal importance in American history. This year saw the beginning of a system of higher education under state control. The protests were loud and long and have by no means ceased to this day. Such protests as the "godless state university" have, however, become so weak that they now have little force.

But the rise of the state universities had another effect: the

gradual but sure undermining of the poorly endowed church college. The reasons are obvious: the state universities are supported by direct tax of the people of the state. The legislatures are willing to appropriate a budget promising adequate buildings and equipment, and a teaching staff of the best qualified experts. Few denominational schools can compete with a state institution. Further, the boys and girls of the most devout families refuse to attend a denominational school when at a less expense they may go to a large university which has not only better equipment, but all the things that appeal to the average American youth. Parents do not protest too much the choice of their sons and daughters, especially when the tuition bills seem like paying taxes twice. As a result, many denominational colleges are closing entirely, or becoming junior colleges, or becoming secular schools in order to share in such financial schemes as the Carnegie Foundation.

The various denominations have viewed with suspicion the growth of state schools. As a result, there have grown up several systems of schools of religion. Some of these have had professors to represent denominations; others have provided student pastors whose business it was to furnish voluntary courses on the edge of the campus. One scheme, that of the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa, has boldly proclaimed the principle of unity in diversity, and the department of Religion is an integral part of the College of Liberal Arts. And why not? Not one student in ten thousand has the slightest interest in debating with anyone the fact that he belongs to a particular denomination. The majority of Protestant students have no interest in denominations whatever. In fact, they consider denominational differences nothing short of a hindrance to the coming Kingdom of God.

3. Another interesting American phenomenon has been the increasing tendency of theological seminaries to give up stressing historic confessions of faith and turn to the study of religion historically. This has resulted in seminaries becoming more and more interdenominational or undenominational. Protestant

theological seminaries are beginning to call to their faculties outstanding scholars rather than the men who hold to some historic confession. Further, every seminary catalog lists with apparent joy the various denominations represented. What is the effect of this mingling of theological students? No Protestant minister, unless he be of a peculiar type of mind, educated in the free manner, can preach a denominational standard. Accordingly, the ancient barriers such as total immersion, peculiar sacramental views, a rigid adherence to any historic confession, are disappearing. This all means an eventual unity in the Church.

4. The development of the Sunday school has also been an American phenomenon. Theoretically, the father of the modern Sunday school was Robert Raikes, a newspaper man of Gloucester, England. He began his experiment in 1789. It was in America, however, that the true genius of the Sunday school was shown. It was in the United States that Sunday school associations developed. These in turn drew the denominations together into interdenominational institutes and even with international lessons. This has advanced the federation of churches and other church schools at a rapid rate.

5. As has already been intimated, theological training no longer consists of ways of expounding a historical confession. In fact, theology (and this is to be regretted) has largely gone out of the churches. A few years back the Social Gospel commanded the field. The World War and the mood of disillusionment, sometimes approaching cynicism and despair, which has followed, have seriously shaken the confidence of the church in the wisdom of putting primary emphasis upon the Social Gospel, but what shall take its place remains to be seen. In some quarters, a revival of humanitarianism (often miscalled humanism) has come to the front. Just now there is an effort to examine the religious experience of the founders and reformers. It looks as though two schools would command attention. One school will go back to the apostles and try to reconstruct a united church on the apostolic order; the other

school will go back to the reformers and try to penetrate behind the historic confessions to the experience of such men as Luther and Calvin and try to build together where these men failed.

But the compelling thing today is the moral demand for Christian unity. Religious education and the missionary enterprise demand unity; social evils demand a united Christendom to combat them; a widespread lack of interest in organized religion can be overcome only by a united effort; but the all-powerful reason is the demand of the Founder of Christianity that "all may be one."

It is not necessary to describe the efforts toward union which have in the recent past been tried with amazing results. The most outstanding have been the Stockholm Conference on Life and Work held in 1925, and the World Conference on Faith and Order held at Lausanne in 1927. These conferences have been so well described that all are familiar with them.

Nor is it necessary to enumerate the cases of actual union which have been accomplished. A few of these, however, show the direction which the Church is bound to take.

The most significant of recent unions is that of the United Church of Canada which took place on June 10, 1925. This is important for the Church in the United States because denominational divisions in Canada arose exactly as in the states. The Scotch felt that they must be loyal to Scotland and the Presbyterian Church; the hard lot of the Methodists in England demanded a certain loyalty of the colonists; in England the state church looked with disfavor on the "chapels" of the Independents, so the Congregationalists had to perpetuate this suspicion; the Baptists could not forget John Bunyan's imprisonment. But some of the Canadian churches eventually began to feel the absurdity of all this with the result that the Methodist, Congregational, and the majority of Presbyterian Churches united to form the United Church of Canada.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The union of the Presbyterians was not absolutely unanimous. Some congregations voted not to join the union and continue under the name of "Continuing Presbyterian Church." It is likely, however, that eventually these congregations will merge into the United Church.

Following the Canadian union, the mother Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian, began to consider her ways. More active negotiations began toward a reunion of its two branches, the Established Church (Auld Kirk) and the United Free Church. These two divisions had existed since 1843, but on October 2, 1929, the breach was healed to the general rejoicing of all Scotland.

Passing over important unions in India and China, we find that the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America have adopted resolutions favoring considering organic union. In the fall of 1929 the Christian Church (not to be confused with the Disciples' Church) united with the Congregational Church and with the issue of March 6, 1930, the papers of the two denominations were officially merged, forming the "Congregationalist and Herald of Christian Liberty."

In conclusion, what has this study shown us? 1. The moral demand of Christian people cannot stop short of apostolic unity. This means a unity which recognizes the right of difference of opinion. The Church of England sets an excellent example in such men as Dean Inge and the late Bishop Gore, who, while far apart theologically, yet were considered loyal churchmen.

2. Some polity must be worked out which is democratic enough to prevent tyranny and, at the same time, episcopal enough to prevent individual congregations from being lost to the Church.

3. Unity will never be absolute. It never has been. There will always be a rebellious fringe which will refuse to cooperate. Force cannot be used to bring such groups to conform, because force is un-Christian. And the ideal must be found in Christ.

## XXII

### AND SO—ON

#### I

"RELIGION in Life" is the name selected for a recent new venture in religious journalism. "Religion *is* life" we might very well vary the theme. The old pattern that undertook to estimate religion as one among a wide variety of aspects of human experience is passing. More and more it becomes apparent that, if religion has any significance at all, it must include all of life. Religion is life, seen in its wholeness, taken in its relation to the whole of reality, consciously seeking that complete integration with reality in which life becomes abundant and complete.

Religion is life. This is a truth that is abundantly verified by the history of religious experience and religious institutions. Two things have been characteristic of religion. First, while religion has always persistently been cast in various institutional moulds, religion has with equal persistence continually broken all such moulds and repeatedly burst forth in new forms of expression.

In the second place, religion seems possessed of a marvelous capacity for critical reconstruction of its own institutionalized patterns. Very often our attention is called to the failures of organized religion. A point that needs new emphasis is the way in which constructive and creative criticism of religion springs persistently from within the circle of the influence of religion itself. This has been particularly true of Christianity. There have been dark enough pages in Christian history. But ever and again, out of the heart of Christianity itself, new expressions of the living Spirit of Jesus have emerged, arising

in protest and revolt against those institutional patterns that seemed to threaten to betray that spirit, and becoming the impetus for the reconstruction of its institutional life.

No reformation of faith or practice, either in religion or, for that matter, in the social, political, or economic structure of society, has ever come as a clean break with the past. After the chaos of destructive criticism has subsided into a new incipient order, after the smoke and dust of the *débris* of crashing institutions have settled and men have begun to clear away the rubbish and attempt to build anew, invariably they build upon foundations that they find already laid. In the face of all that present-day critics of religion are saying about the impotence of religion, about its being an opiate and a parasite and a brake upon the wheels of progress, about the stubborn resistance with which it has always opposed every movement for advance or reformation—in the face of all the formidable array of evidence that can be marshaled to support such a view, we make bold to affirm that religion itself has been the inspiration and guiding genius of every significant movement for social and religious reconstruction. It is true enough that the official representatives and institutional leaders of religion have often enough opposed reform. But the men and women who have led the crusade against outworn institutions in behalf of a more adequate expression of human life and religious experience have invariably found the inspiration for their crusade in the bosom of religion.

This was true of the prophets of Israel. Although they were persecuted and opposed by the official representatives of religion they claimed to speak in behalf of the very religious institution that rejected their ministry and derived the inspiration for their prophetic message from the same religion in whose name they were reviled and persecuted. Gautama came out of the womb of the Hinduism that he sought to lead into a revitalized experience. Jesus began his ministry with the insistent declaration, "I am come not to destroy but to fulfil."<sup>1</sup> He fed his soul upon the great prophetic utterances born in creative

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 5:17. American Standard Version.

epochs in the religious history of Israel. St. Francis throughout his life maintained the attitude of a faithful and loyal son of the church which he labored to reform. John Wesley retained until his death his status as a priest of the English Establishment. Today the primary criticisms of organized religion are coming from men who profess to speak in behalf of the spirit and the ideals of Jesus. Religion is life—life resurgent, life dynamic, life creative and redemptive.

## II

Criticism of and antagonism to the Christian movement is coming, today, from two major sources. On the one hand, some who have come under the influence of scientific theory, particularly in its materialistic and deterministic forms, have concluded that Christianity is inextricably involved in a world view and in thought patterns that are utterly inconsistent with the findings and hypotheses of science upon which the world view and by which the thought patterns of men and women today and tomorrow must be determined. Christianity is no longer intellectually respectable from their point of view. At the same time, this group has been compelled to reckon with the stark abysmal tragedy of any attempt to construct life upon a basis of the complete renunciation of religion. They have, therefore, concluded that Christianity must give way to a new type of religion—a religion without a God. The strength of this revamped Positivism, this modernized Stoicism, which has been rather loosely labeled "Humanism," lies in its attempt to combine the ethical values of Christian tradition with the intellectual mood of modern science. Already, however, evidence multiplies that present-day humanism is not likely to play any more significant part in the ultimate structure of human thinking and living than did eighteenth century Positivism before it. The trend toward theological reconstruction has developed far enough to draw the teeth of its criticism of Christian tradition as irreconcilable with the thought patterns of the modern world. And, insofar as Humanism has challenged Christianity upon distinc-



tively humanistic grounds, it has simply re-echoed the essential humanism that is inherent in the Christian ideal itself.

In the second place Christianity, in common with religion generally, must reckon with the attack of militant Communism. "Religion is the opiate of the people" is the Golden Test of communist doctrine. And in Russia, or in America, those groups who accept the doctrine of Marx and Lenin, conceive it part of their mission in the world to root out religion as an incorrigible enemy of human progress. We must not underestimate the force of this attack. The Communist program is still too young in Russia for anyone to come to conclusions as to its ultimate significance or the character of its ultimate institutional pattern. While we may admit that the history of the Christian Church all too often discloses organized Christianity allied with the defenders of the *status quo*, those who despair of religion on the ground of its ultra-conservative and socially reactionary character fail adequately to appreciate the contribution which such leaders as Moses, Amos, Micah, and Jesus, and others who have shared their spirit and carried forward the prophetic tradition of protest, radical criticism, and social reconstruction have made to human progress. Further, the appreciation of human values, the passion for human liberation, and the ideal of social responsibility, cooperative living and social reconstruction that is characteristic of Communism owes more to the Christian movement and the prophetic ministry of Christian leaders than its advocates are willing to admit. For the present we must content ourselves with the re-affirmation of our faith that "man does not live by bread alone." \* No program that does not look beyond the demands of a merely physical existence, and that does not offer to hard-beset human spirits access to sources of power and spiritual re-enforcement that lie outside themselves can ever satisfy the human spirit. In the affirmation of this faith the Christian movement has never wavered. Those who have collaborated in this study are confident that the future will belong increasingly to this faith.

\* Deuteronomy 8:3.

The Jerusalem Conference agreed that the most formidable opponent of the Christian religion in the world today is, not any of the great ethnic religions, but rather the secularist drift—the tendency of men and women to regard religion as a matter of relative indifference, to look to the increasing control over natural forces brought about by applied science and to the extension of human knowledge through scientific investigation and discovery, to satisfy all the needs of human living, to conclude that there can be no satisfactions realizable in human experience which lie outside the range of physical existence. In any average community today the greatest obstacle to the growth of the Christian Church is not any competing religion, nor yet any open or avowed opposition to religion voiced either by groups or by individuals. It is rather the indifference of considerable numbers of the population to religion in any form. We have already remarked that the Humanists, who have done most thinking upon this subject, have already recoiled from the inescapable logic of life totally divorced from religion. Signs are not wanting that a similar reaction is becoming apparent among the relatively unthinking masses. The experience of multitudes since the summer of 1929 has shaken any confidence which we might once have cherished that life could find lasting satisfactions for its hungers and enduring foundations for its hopes upon any foundation that does not reach out into the realms of spirit. The swing of the pendulum seems definitely set toward a re-discovery by the common man of the significance and value of religion.

The years since the war have seemed to reveal still another antagonist which the Christian movement must reckon. That is the intransigent nationalism that has dominated the political life of the world during the past generation. The World War swept practically the entire population of the globe into the procession led by the nationalists. The rising tide of protest against the continuation of a system of international polity that anticipated war as a normal and inescapably recurrent phenomenon and sought to organize the entire economic and politi-

cal life of mankind for the major purpose of war making, provoked a violent reaction among extreme militarists and nationalists. No sooner had the war come to a close than the military party in the United States set about, through a reorganization of the National Guard, the development of enlisted reserves, the extension of military training among students in High Schools and Colleges and among the general population through citizens military training camps, and by widespread propaganda through a variety of patriotic organizations, to establish America as the paramount military power in the world. The militant program of the Communists and their avowed intention to promote revolution against the capitalistic order on a world-wide scale, together with the rise of radical protest in the congested industrial centers of American society, played into the hands of the extreme nationalists and resulted in an organized "Red Hunt" both by official governmental agencies and by various unofficial and private groups, and led to the branding of everyone who ventured a criticism of existing institutions and practices, either of industry or government, as a dangerous radical and an agent of Communism. This movement reached its climax in the United States in the decision of the Supreme Court which denied to Professor MacIntosh American citizenship because he refused to surrender unconditionally his liberty of conscience to the tyranny of governmental authority. The widespread protest coming from all ranks in American society, and particularly from the spokesmen of organized Christianity, against this decision, makes it evident that a considerable element in the population is not minded to acquiesce in this revival of the worship of the state. The outcome of the World War with its aftermath of taxes, debts, reparations and universal economic confusion, makes it exceedingly unlikely that mankind generally will tolerate for long the unrestricted rule of nationalism.

Altogether, when seen in relation to its most active competitors, the outlook for the future of the Christian movement in America is bright with promise.

## III

There is evident throughout this cooperative study a serious purpose to face the realities of the present situation in which we find the Christian movement. There is, likewise, evident a fearlessness and freedom from the restraining bonds of tradition and a courageous faith in the future of the Christian movement. The theological reconstruction that was made imperative by the revolution in our thought patterns and in the vocabulary of our experience, produced by the development of science and its application to the structure and mechanics of human living, is already under way. While the construction of a completely adequate re-statement of our Christian world-view is still some distance in the future, and while there are yet large areas in the Christian movement in which independent thinking and open-mindedness toward the spirit and patterns of modern thinking are still suspect, yet for the most part the controlling influences within the Christian movement are frankly sympathetic with the point of view of science. There has been a revolution in both the dimensions and the details of the program of the church, within the last hundred years, that is fairly commensurate with the transformation in environment and habit of living which has come in every other field of experience. In the field of theological education, while considerable areas of the organized church lag far behind, those groups that represent the most aggressive and vital elements in the Christian movement are frankly facing the demands of the new day and earnestly striving to provide a ministry adequately trained "to serve the present age." In the field of religious education, of church architecture, of program both of the rural and of the city church, and in the far-flung missionary enterprise, the Christian movement is seeking to adapt its methods to meet the changing situations in which it finds itself. In no previous epoch of her history has the Christian Church given greater evidence of her capacity to adapt her message and program to changing needs and altered situations.

It seems clear that the years ahead are likely to see an acceleration of the drift toward consolidation of the Christian forces of America, and of the world. The meeting of such world-representative groups as came together at Stockholm, Lausanne, and Jerusalem, and the evident intention to continue the calling of such gatherings, is evidence of a growing appreciation among Christian people generally of the essential unity of the common faith. While there has probably not been a time in many years in which the church, as the organized expression of the Christian movement, was being subjected to so great an amount of searching criticism as it is today, it is likewise true that there has not been a generation since the first apostles started out along the long road, in which Jesus occupied so large a place in the center of the attention of the world's thought and hope and faith. Whatever changes the years may bring in the organized form in which the Christian movement may find expression, it is certain that in ever-increasing measure the sovereignty of the world's faith and life is destined to be His

until the Kingdom of the world is  
become the Kingdom of our Lord and of  
His Christ.\*

\* Revelation 11:15. American Standard Version.



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